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POLL RESULTS

Do you think a 180-day delay in the implementation of federalization will help the CNMI?

Yes **38**

No **107**

Undecided **2**

No opinion **3**

Sunday, March 29, 2009

INSIDE

Good News

Fargo's fears of a catastrophic flood eased Saturday with word that the Red River apparently crested at lower-than-expected levels, and weary residents turned their attention to ensuring their hastily built levees hold up against an onslaught of ice-laden water expected to stay high for at least a week.

Nation...Page 15



Kids' Choice

"High School Music 3: Senior Year" graduated with honors Saturday at the Kids Choice Awards.

Life & Style...Page 20

Big crowd at Covenant rally to kick off 2009 campaign. **PAGE 2**

Baka dismissed from OGA suit. **PAGE 3**

IMPENDING FEDERALIZATION OF CNMI

Hispanic Caucus asks for 180-day delay

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus is supporting CNMI delegate Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan's request for a 180-day extension to the start date of the federalization law, saying without more preparation families of workers could be needlessly separated.



Sablan

"We believe that a 180-day delay is necessary to ensure the 'orderly' extension of Federal Immigration law to the NMI, and to ensure that the extension of Federal Immigration law to the NMI does not result in the needless separation of families," said CHC Chair

See **HISPANIC** on Page 4



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Department of Commerce's Sixto Igisomar, left, lawmakers and other government officials listen as Rep. Stanley Torres, right, shares his views on how to help develop call centers as an alternative industry in the CNMI during a break out session at the Pre-Economic Restoration Summit for lawmakers and other government officials at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe on Friday.

Summit identifies 4 alternative industries for CNMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The pre-economic restoration summit identified agriculture, aquaculture, educational tourism, and call centers as four

alternative industries for the CNMI, which now relies heavily on a dwindling tourism sector to fuel its economy after the demise of the once almighty garment industry.

Lawmakers and other gov-

ernment leaders on Friday identified ways and policies that will help develop these four industries identified by the private sector during a similar session two weeks ago.

See **SUMMIT** on Page 4

Antarctica to Pyramids—lights dim for Earth Hour

By RUPA SHENOY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

CHICAGO (AP)—From an Antarctic research base and the Great Pyramids of Egypt to the Empire State Building in New York and the



Sears Tower in Chicago, illuminated patches of the globe

went dark Saturday for Earth Hour, a campaign to highlight the threat of climate change.

Time zone by time zone,



AP

This photo combination shows Times Square before, above, and during, below, a one hour call to action for climate change during World Wildlife Fund's Earth Hour 2009 on Saturday, March 28, 2009 in New York City.

nearly 4,000 cities and towns in 88 countries joined the event sponsored by the World

See **ANTARTICA** on Page 4

Fitia! urges Article 12 discussion

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitia! encourages discussion on Article 12 of the NMI Constitution, after taking notice of a growing community movement to reconsider the merits of the constitutional provision.

The Citizens for Change to Article 12, a non-profit private

group, has been leading discussions on the issue.



Fitia!

Article 12 restricts the fee simple sale of CNMI real property exclusively to persons of Northern Marianas descent and other constitutionally qualified individuals based on certain political definitions.

"I encourage the widest possible discussion on Article 12

See **FITIAL** on Page 4

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Local



Gov. Benigno R. Fitial addresses the crowd of well over a thousand as his running mate, Finance secretary Eloy Inos, right, and their families look on during the Covenant Party's kick off rally at the Civic Center in Susupe yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Gov. Benigno R. Fitial walks past supporters on his way to the stage during yesterday's Covenant Party kick off rally which drew well over a thousand supporters at the Civic Center in Susupe.

Big crowd at Covenant rally to kick off 2009 campaign

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A crowd of well over a thousand packed the Civic Center in Susupe yesterday for the Covenant Party's kick off rally for the 2009 campaign led by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and his running mate Finance Secretary Eloy Inos.

Fitial, founder of the Covenant Party, said he is "encouraged" by the big crowd, but said there will be more people supporting him in the November election than the crowd present yesterday.

"The showing today is very encouraging, but we will continue to work toward the finish line. We understand that it's not going to be easy, but we are ready to face any challenges along the way to the finish line," Fitial told *Saipan Tribune* after addressing the crowd on stage.

Highlighting the kick off rally was the official presentation of Fitial and Inos as the Covenant Party's top candidates for the Nov. 7, 2009 elections, along with the candidates on Rota and Tinian who also took part in yesterday's festivities.

The governor said they will have a complete slate of candidates in this year's gubernatorial polls, but the party's candidates committee has yet to finalize the list.

Fitial and Inos called up their family members on stage and introduced them to the crowd, mostly wearing green which is the party's official color. In his remarks, governor also recognized the service of Army Staff Sgt. Edward Barcinas.

Special assistant for administration Esther Fleming pumped up the crowd as she repeatedly chanted "Biba Covenant," echoed by the crowd of Covenant supporters. Vicente N. Santos served as the event's keynote speaker.

Greg Camacho, overall chairman of the Covenant Party's executive committee, said he is "honored and proud" with the big size of the crowd at the kick off rally.

"Today is an indication that people are still confident about and trust Governor Fitial and his running mate, Eloy Inos," Camacho said in an interview.

Full slate

Alvaro Santos, chairman of the Covenant Party's strategy committee, said they will have a full slate of candidates for this year's election.

"I think between now and summer...I would say we will

have a little over 30 candidates—from the governor down to the Board of Education members," he said.

Santos said Tinian Mayor Jose P. San Nicolas and Rota Mayor Joseph Inos, along with other candidates from Rota and Tinian, traveled to Saipan for the kick off rally. He said the slate of candidates for the two islands is now complete.

As for the Saipan mayoralty race, Santos said there are three Covenant members who seek the position but only one of them—Candido Taman—has officially submitted his letter of intent, while the other two are still consulting with their families.

Besides the candidates for governor, lieutenant governor, and mayor, the Covenant Party also has six House candidates for Precinct 1, two for Precinct 2, six for Precinct 3, two for Precinct 4, and two for Precinct 5, according to Santos.

"And this year, it will also include two seats in the Senate, and for the Northern Islands... It's quite an exciting election year because it covers a lot of grounds—the mayor, the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Board of Education, the Municipal Council," he said.

He said with the big turnout at the campaign rally, he is "very optimistic that we will carry through in the November election."

"I would like to add that we're also working with other groups, not only within the Covenant Party, but also the independents and other political parties who share the vision of this administration... The support is there and it's very encouraging. We are very positive," he said.

During the Nov. 1, 2003 polls, the Covenant Party won nine of 18 seats. In the 2005 elections of Nov. 5, the political party increased its position as one of the strongest parties on the islands, as its candidate for governor, Fitial won, and the party received seven of 18 seats in the House of Representatives and three of nine seats in the Senate. In the Nov. 3, 2007 polls, the party took only four of 20 House seats.

Antonette Villagomez, 32, who came all the way from Tinian to attend the kick off rally along with her family and friends, said she believes the Fitial administration will continue to work for the people, and continue to prioritize education.

Besides the speeches mostly in Chamorro, the kick off rally also consisted of food, live song performances, and other entertainment.

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Baka dismissed from OGA suit

By KRISTI EATON

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REPORTER

Acting Attorney General Gregory Baka has been dismissed as a defendant in Rep. Tina Sablan's lawsuit over documents she requested under the Open Government Act.

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman ruled in favor of the defen-

dants—Baka, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, and Finance Secretary Eloy Inos—to dismiss Baka because neither OGA request was addressed to the acting attorney general.

In October, Sablan wrote a letter to Fitial requesting copies of contracts related to the lawsuit against federalization, including the contract between the CNMI government and

law firm Jenner & Block; documents relating to payments of the contracts; documents detailing funding sources for the contracts; and documents identifying where money was reprogrammed in order to finance the lawsuit.

Baka, as acting Attorney General, declined to produce the records on behalf of Fitial. He asserted that such documents are

exempt from the OGA because they are related to a pending issue in the lawsuit and would not be discoverable by the United States.

Sablan then wrote to Inos requesting the same thing. She again was denied.

Neither letter was addressed to Baka, Wiseman said.

"Instead, Defendant Baka, acting on behalf of the Governor, responded to

Plaintiff Sablan's request. Therefore, it is clear that he cannot be held in violation of the Act be-

cause no request was ever directed to him," Wiseman wrote in his ruling.

"Further, nothing indicates that a full and complete adjudication of this case is not possible without Mr. Baka. Nothing

indicates that Mr. Baka was acting in any capacity other

than the attorney who was representing Governor Fitial," the judge added.

Sablan argued that Baka might be in possession of the documents. However, the possible possession of the documents does not warrant the acting attorney general to be a part of the suit, Wiseman said.

Wiseman has ordered the parties to appear on April 9 to address the main issue of whether Sablan is entitled to the documents that she requested.



Baka

EPA: Hopeful CUC can meet requirements

By KRISTI EATON

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REPORTER

An official from the Environmental Protection Agency says the agency is optimistic the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will meet the requirements of a consent decree signed between the two parties to compel CUC to adhere to federal regulations governing water, sewer, power, and fuel.

"We're optimistic. They've already met some of the requirements," said Barry F. Pollock, environmental engineer for EPA's water division.

Earlier this month, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson signed an order that sets requirements

and deadlines for the utility agency to meet.

In November, the Department of Justice and EPA filed a civil suit against the utility agency for failure to comply with the Safe Water Act and Clean Water Act for years. The suit was accompanied by two stipulated orders, which means that the CNMI government agreed to the terms and conditions being required of it by the EPA.

Pollock said CUC has already met some of the major requirements, including hiring Bruce Megarr as deputy director of the Water and Sewer Division.

According to a presentation before the Legislature last month, the cost incurred for

2009 to complete the necessary projects to meet the requirements is \$5.8 million. For 2010, the cost decreases to \$3 million and in 2011 it drops to \$2.8 million.

The biggest obstacle, Megarr said, is funding. The

current sewer rates were set in 1987. The current water rates were set in 1995.

The Public Utilities Commission is set to vote on rate increase this week. At a PUC public hearing last week, Larry Gawlik, a consultant with Georgetown Consulting Group, said he estimates mil-

lions of dollars are being lost from the wastewater division because of a loophole in the law that allows for some non-residential customers to go unbilled for service.

When PUC commissioner Kyle Calabrese asked Gawlik at the hearing if he thought CUC could comply with the decree,

Gawlik said:

"I can't answer definitely yes, but I do think they're moving in the right direction."

During the hearing, Antonio Muna, executive director for CUC, said every dollar within the water and wastewater division was being used to be in compliance.

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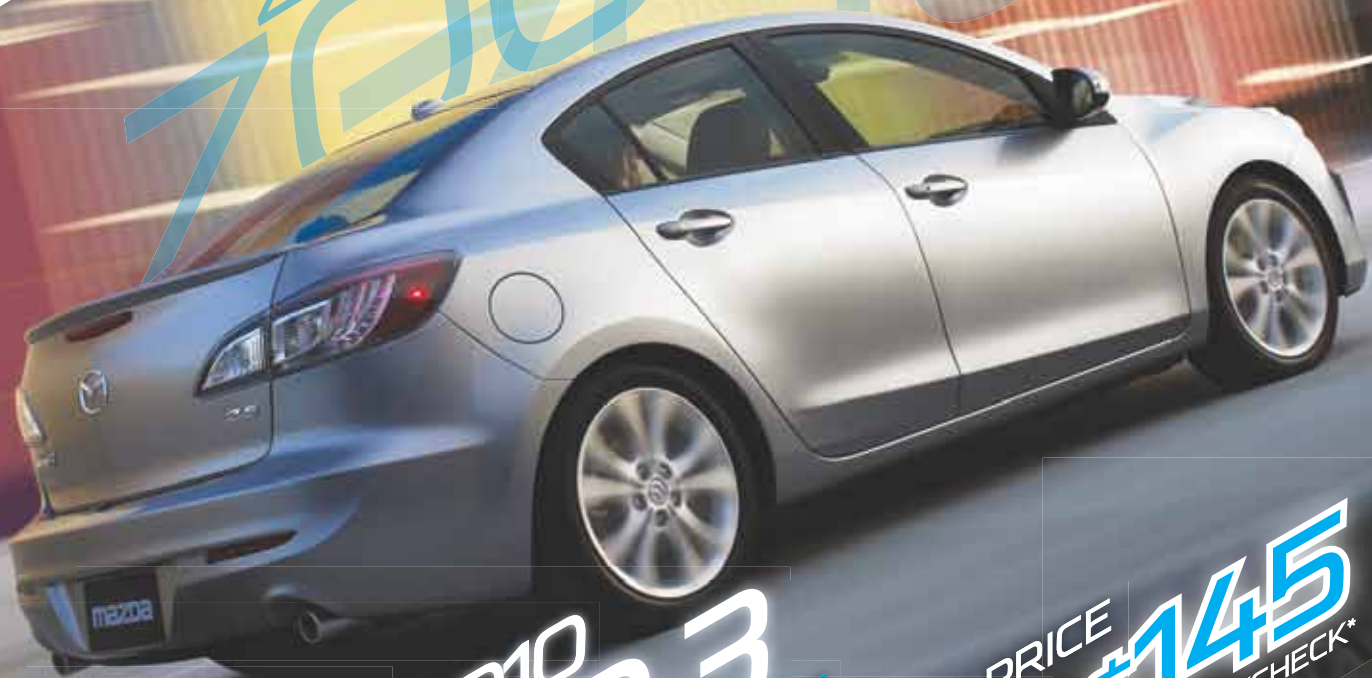
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ANTARTICA

From Page 1

Wildlife Fund to dim nonessential lights from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The campaign began in Australia in 2007 and last year grew to 400 cities worldwide.

Organizers initially worried enthusiasm this year would wane with the world focused on the global economic crisis, said Earth Hour executive director Andy Ridley. But he said it apparently had the opposite effect.

“Earth Hour has always been a positive campaign; it’s always around street parties, not street protests, it’s the idea of hope, not despair. And I think that’s something that’s been incredibly important this year because there is so much despair around,” he said.

Crowds in Times Square watched as many of the massive billboards, including the giant Coca-Cola display, darkened. Steps away, the Majestic Theater marquee at the home of “The Phantom of the Opera” went dark, along with the marquees at other Broadway shows.

Mikel Rouse, 52, a composer who lives and works nearby came to watch what he called “the center of the universe” dim its lights.

“C’mon, is it really necessary? ... All this ridiculous advertising ... all

this corporate advertising taking up all that energy seems to be a waste,” Rouse said.

In Chicago, one of 10 U.S. Earth Hour flagship cities, a small crowd braved a cold rain to count down as Gov. Pat Quinn flipped a 4-foot-tall mock light switch that organizers had to brace against high winds. A second later, the buildings behind him went dark.

“I don’t see why people shouldn’t always turn off the lights,” pondered 15-year-old Chicagoan Tyler Oria, who was among those gathered.

More than 200 buildings pledged to go dark in the city, including shops along the Magnificent Mile.

“No matter what your individual beliefs are about climate change, energy efficiency is something everyone can understand in this economic environment,” said WWF managing director Darron Collins, who helped Chicago officials organize for the night.

The Smithsonian Castle, World Bank, National Cathedral and Howard University were among several buildings that went dark for an hour in the nation’s capital.

“This was the first year that Washington, D.C., became an official Earth Hour city,” said Leslie Aun, WWF spokeswoman.

In the Chilean capital of Santiago,

lights were turned off at banks, the city’s communications tower and several government buildings, including the Presidential Palace where President Michelle Bachelet hosted a dinner for U.S. Vice President Joe Biden.

The two leaders and dozens of guests dined at candlelight.

In Mexico City, the city government and business owners turned off all “nonessential” lights at more than 100 buildings, including 31 city buildings and monuments and 17 hotels.

In San Francisco, lights on landmarks like the Golden Gate Bridge were set to be turned off, along with the city’s well-known Ghirardelli Square sign. The Las Vegas Strip turned down its glitz by extinguishing pockets of neon outside casinos while some witnesses alerted their

friends on Twitter.

U.N. Secretary Ban Ki-moon called Earth Hour “a way for the citizens of the world to send a clear message: They want action on climate change.”

An agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012, is supposed to be reached in Copenhagen, Denmark, this December, and environmentalists’ sense of urgency has spurred interest in this year’s Earth Hour.

In Bonn, WWF activists held a candlelit cocktail party on the eve of a U.N. climate change meeting, the first in a series of talks leading up to Copenhagen. The goal is to get an ambitious deal to curb emissions of heat-trapping gases that scientists say are dangerously warming the planet.

“People want politicians to take ac-

tion and solve the problem,” said Kim Carstensen, director of the global climate initiative for WWF, speaking in a piano bar bathed by candlelight and lounge music.

China participated for the first time, cutting the lights at Beijing’s Bird’s Nest Stadium and Water Cube, the most prominent 2008 Olympic venues. In Bangkok, the prime minister switched off the lights on Khao San Road, a haven for budget travelers packed with bars and outdoor cafes.

In Rio de Janeiro, the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue that watches over the city of 6 million was darkened, along with the beachfront of the famed Copacabana and a few other local sites.

Earth Hour organizers say there’s no uniform way to measure how much energy is saved worldwide.

FITIAL

From Page 1

land restrictions. It is important for us to consider what policy will be right for the next generation of CNMI residents and whether our current policy on land restrictions is still supported by the CNMI majority,” Fitial said in a statement.

The governor said the people of the CNMI must ultimately decide whether

to continue current restrictions.

Section 805 of the CNMI’s Covenant Agreement with the United States allows the CNMI to revisit its land alienation restrictions 25 years after the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement in 1986. That 25-year period will end in 2011.

Earlier, the Citizens for Change to Article 12 chaired by Efrain F. Camacho said doing away with the land alienation provision is not the end of the Chamorro and Carolinian cultures,

which those opposed to the idea want the public to believe.

Article 12, according to the group, actually also allowed persons of any national origin through adoption, and even corporations to be officially designated “persons of Northern Marianas decent.”

The argument that the end of Article 12 is the end of the Chamorro and Carolinian cultures is a myth and unrelated to the issues surrounding Article 12, the group said.

SUMMIT

From Page 1

Minimizing bureaucracy or the run-around time for investors to secure permits and business licenses, investing on infrastructure especially power and water, and ensuring that laws and regulations are enforced instead of amending them all the time, were among those identified by participants to help propel these alternative industries.

Also among the possible legislative actions considered were subsidies for actions or transactions completed in each industry, minimizing incentives which guarantee funds at the onset of a company’s startup, and how the Legislature can shift some of the tax collected by the government to workforce training.

But for House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios, helping to develop these industries is not all about coming up with new legislation or laws, but reviewing “what has already been done in the past, why some of them failed, and why some of them succeeded.”

“For example, we should ask, what happened to the agriculture and fishery industry, which already has very generous incentives? What will it take to further develop this industry because it’s not new... What kind of land mass

is needed, what types of crops and experts are needed,” he said.

He also cited the need to revisit the agricultural development plan developed by experts from Hawaii and Guam years ago.

“It’s going to take an entrepreneur to make these alternative industries succeed, with the help of the government,” Palacios told *Saipan Tribune*. He also said that an information technology industry should also be seen as an alternative industry.

Friday’s legislative/government session of the pre-economic restoration summit held at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe drew the participation of 11 senators and House members, along with about 20 other government officials.

Commerce Secretary Michael Ada said the legislative/government session hoped to “identify policies or legislation that will move these industries.”

“It’s all about how should we strategize to develop these industries” he added.

Results of the private sector and government sessions will be presented during the April 2 and 3 Economic Restoration Summit.

Guam Lt. Gov. Mike Cruz will be the guest speaker at the summit, to discuss business opportunities brought by the military buildup on Guam, Ada said.

Representatives from the U.S. Small Business Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture may also be present at the summit as resource persons, he added.

Ada, however, told *Saipan Tribune* that the government needs to be cautious in giving out incentives to industries in these tough economic times.

“We cannot continue to give away things we don’t have, and let’s not give incentives for everything... We need to be more thoughtful of what we give. We don’t want to tell the Legislature what to do but we hope they’ll give some thoughts on legislation needed to help these industries,” he said.

Viability

During a breakout session, lawmakers and government divided themselves into four groups, each tackling the viability and the ways to develop one of the four identified alternative industries.

The multi-billion military buildup on Guam, for example, provides opportunity for CNMI farmers and ranchers to sell their fresh produce to the military, similar to what businessman Anthony Pellegrino has done with his shrimp business.

IT&E, which opened the first call center in the CNMI last year and has applied for a qualifying certificate for

incentives, may also face healthy competition from other investors looking into the viability of the industry.

A call center is an office where a company’s inbound calls are received, our outbound calls are made.

However, participants raised concern whether the CNMI has the manpower required by a call center industry.

Aquaculture, although not new in the CNMI, posted sales of \$66,725 in 2007 compared to only \$6,150 in 2002 based on the U.S. agricultural census, and its viability is a potential pillar to the economy.

Educational tourism, according to Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider, has already taken off in the CNMI but should be further developed.

“It’s a viable industry, but we will need to revisit some policies that may affect the industry, especially in light of the federalization of our immigration. We need to look at the student visa policies in place. For example, young students from Asian countries who study English here, can their parents be also allowed to stay here, say, for two years?” he said.

But participants asked whether there are enough facilities in the CNMI to support more educational institutions that will attract foreign students.

Sergio Loya, project manager of consulting firm Management Analysis

Inc., said economic development and establishing industries are not an exact science. Some things will work, others will not, he said. However, the CNMI can take calculated risks and specific actions that when managed properly, minimizes the risk and chances of failures.

He said the Legislature can act proactively, reactively, or take no action on economic development actions.

The lawmakers who participated in the break out session to identify ways and policies to develop each of the four identified alternative industries were Senate President Pete P. Reyes, Sen. Jude Hofschneider, Sen. Maria “Frica” Pangelinan, and Sen. Paterno Hocog, along with House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios, Rep. Ray Yumul, Rep. Ralph Torres, Rep. Joe Reyes, Rep. Stanley Torres, Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero, and Rep. Raymond Palacios.

The pre-economic restoration summit is hosted by the Department of Commerce, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Development Authority, the Northern Marianas College, and IT&E.

Results of the April 2 and 3 economic summit will be shared by the CNMI team at the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs 2009 Conference on Business Opportunities in the Islands, to be held in Honolulu on April 6 to 8.

HISPANIC

From Page 1

Nydia M. Velaquez (D-NY) and CHC Immigration Task Force Chair Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL) in a letter to Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano.

Scheduled to begin June 1, the Consolidated Natural Resources Act will extend U.S. immigration laws to the CNMI. The law allows for a delay of up to 180 days. CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Guam Gov. Felix Camacho, Sablan, and local business groups have all asked for a delay. The CNMI and Guam legislatures also support a 180-day extension.

In February, delegate Sablan wrote a letter to Napolitano requesting the extension for three reasons: a lack of sufficient funding; delays in issuance of regulations; and the potential disruption of families.

“We support Congressman Sablan’s request for these three reasons, but would especially draw your attention to the humanitarian concerns that merit the delay,” the chairs wrote in the letter. “During the transition period, there will be new classes of non-immigrants eligible to live in the NMI, including NMI-only workers, and ‘grandfathered’ aliens who are permitted to live and work in the NMI for the duration of their NMI-issued visas.”

However, NMI-only non-immigrants will be eligible to live and work in the CNMI but will not be able to leave and re-enter the Commonwealth without a U.S. Department of State-issued visa. Sablan earlier said he was told there was no knowledge of plans to issue visas in the NMI.

“We are concerned that this means there are no plans, or, if there are plans but Homeland Security doesn’t know about them, then these plans are being made without communication with the agency that is nearly entirely responsible for regulating the classes of people for whom visas will have to be issued,” the letter stated.

Moreover, many families will be af-

fected, they said. Immediate relatives or “IRs” of U.S. citizens may currently live, work and re-enter the Northern Marianas, but many IRs are not eligible for U.S. visas. Although under the law they will be able to stay in the CNMI for the duration of their IR permit, if they must leave at any time, they risk being separated from their families without a U.S.-issued visa, Velaquez and Gutierrez said.

Sablan, a member of the Caucus, said he is grateful for the support of the CHC’s 23 members.

“And I am confident that this group, which is so influential when it comes to immigration policy, will be listened to by Secretary Napolitano,” he said in a statement.

Last week Sablan and the other Caucus members spent an hour at the White House with President Obama confirming the President’s support for comprehensive immigration reform and discussing their overall strategy.

More time will allow him to work with DHS and the Department of State to protect families, Sablan said.

“I know there are people who say let’s just get on with it,” he said. “But we can do this ‘quick and dirty’ and watch innocent people get hurt in the process, or we can do this in an ‘orderly’ fashion, as the law requires.

“The purpose of the 180-day delay is not delay; it’s to be sure we do it right,” the Congressman added.

14 students advances to Thespian nationals

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Fourteen middle and high school students from various private and public schools in the Commonwealth were named gold medalists in the 2009 Thespian Regional Competition and will officially represent the CNMI in the national contest in Lincoln, Nebraska in June.

Organized by the National Forensic League board, 25 finalists vied for the prestigious awards during the four-hour competition held in the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe Friday night.

The nine gold medalists in the high school division included Kagman High School's Miki Dela Cruz who ruled in the solo musical category; Marianas High School's Liel Tipples for solo monologue; Kagman High's Akiko Dela Cruz and Aisha Joyner for duet acting; and MHS' Tommy Baik and Moon Hyo Lee for mime.

Three students of MHS also ruled the technical aspect of the thespian competition as Adeleya Mojica was adjudged gold medalist in the film category, Kay Park for overall set design, and Earllon Granada as overall best costume design.

In the junior division, Reese Brown of Saipan-American Education Foundation topped the solo musical category, while Chacha Oceanview Junior High's Zalika Joyner ruled the monologue competition. In the duet acting, middle schoolers Royze Banados and Dayanara Flores of Hopwood Junior High emerged overall winners, while their school-

mate, Ray Mark Denora, won gold in the mime category.

According to Harold Easton, NFL board chair, the CNMI has been sending delegates to thespian national contest for the last five years.

Saipan Tribune learned that among the honors bestowed to previous CNMI team members included Top 8 in the nation for costume design and Top 4 in the nation for duet acting in 2007. It was also adjudged Top 2 in the nation in costume design and Top 10 in solo musical in 2008 national competition.

A thespian scholarship for set design was also awarded to a CNMI student in 2007 along with the inclusion of a team member in the official videographers for the thespian national festival.

"We've done extremely well the previous years and we're confident with our team this year. Seeing the commitment and dedication of our kids who were chosen among the bests on our islands, I have no doubt on the honors they would bring to us," said Easton.

Contenders in the thespian regional were the Top 3 performers in the contest categories during the first four preliminary rounds throughout the year which were determined through accumulative points gained in every contest round.

Easton described Friday night's competition as very intense.

Zalika Joyner, the competition's best in monologue, said she's excited to be included in the national thespian team.

MHS' Adeleya Mojica, overall winner in film, said

Friday's event was a tough competition.

"I feel good...because I find this competition very tough and I made it. I am excited to go to the national and compete in film with other students from other states. It's a good opportunity to showcase the talents we have in the CNMI," she said.

Gold medalists in the 2009 Thespian Regional Competition strike a pose during the awards ceremony Friday night. The team will be the CNMI's delegates to the national contest to be held in Lincoln, Nebraska in June.

MONETH G. DEPOSA



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IT&E asks for 100 percent tax break on new call center

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

IT&E's PTI Services Inc. has formally filed its qualifying certificate application to the Commonwealth Development Authority seeking the maximum tax breaks and abatement for its \$3.6 million additional investment for the island's first call center business.

In a notice filed by CDA, it was declared that the call center intends to invest the approximate amount to expand and operate its center located in Susupe.

PTI Services applied for 100 percent abatement on business gross revenue tax, excise tax, capital gains tax, and seeking a 100 percent rebate on corporate income tax—all for a 25-year period.

Under the Investment Act of 2000, the CNMI government through CDA can provide companies up to 100 percent tax benefits to encourage new businesses.

Currently, the call center firm has 40 seats and it will increase up to 300 seats—a factor that would result to additional jobs, more investment and revenue for the government.

Early this month, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial expressed willingness to approve the tax break request of the company.

In 2006, a call center business was proposed then later cancelled by investors citing the impact of federalization and minimum wage hike in the CNMI. The supposed first call center facility was proposed by Eric Van Der Maas and his co-partner based in Los Angeles.

Saipan Tribune learned that from having only about 10 personnel when the call center opened in May 2008, the IT&T's call center now has 57 telephone operators, supervisors, and other personnel taking in 6,000 to 13,000 calls daily.

Meantime, the 40-seat call center provides 411 directory assistance services mainly to Hawaiian Telecom customers 24 hours a day, and is now exploring partnerships with other U.S.-based investors to outsource similar services.

The Qualifying Certificate Program, which was established on Dec. 1, 2000, grants tax incentives to investors to put up new investments in the CNMI or assist existing investors to expand their operations.

Since its inception, the QC program has attracted 11 com-

panies, produced immediate benefits of \$28.12 million from capital expenditures, and

generated a total of \$100.59 million in taxes, local purchases, utility payments, and other

community contributions over the seven years the program has been in place.

KagES Cultural Day has raised \$10K

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Kagman Elementary School's Cultural Day has provided over \$10,000 in additional funds for the school, according to principal Ignacia Demapan.

She disclosed that besides the rides, games, informational displays, and song-and-dance performances, the whole-day activity has also raised funds for KagES students' immediate needs on campus.

Demapan said KagES managed to raise the amount through the traditional Little & Miss Blue Marlin, which this year were won by Manny Aaron and Justin Rain Kirby.

Last Saturday, community members once again gathered at the KagES campus and joined the school as it held its ninth annual cultural day which was highlighted by presentations and demonstrations from various ethnic groups.

This year's theme was "Connecting our culture and heritage to make a difference in our future."

The school actually held a theme competition that was won

by fifth grader Kowa Limes.

"The teachings of our ancestors bestowed on subsequent generations value the arts, celebrations, respect, love, virtues, morals and celebrations of life. From this, we learn and practice the ways of life as our ancestors have taught us...let's celebrate and make difference in our future," Limes said.

KagES is home to 624 students from various cultures—Chamorro, Carolinian, Japanese, Koreans, Paluan, Chinese, Filipinos, Thais, Caucasians, and citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Demapan said that through activities and programs like the Cultural Day, students of the school are given importance by highlighting and appreciating their individual cultural roots and origins.

"This is where it is designed for...to make everyone understand, appreciate, respect, and love each other's cultural backgrounds and tradition," she said, adding the event also promotes appreciation and learning of the arts.

Among the cultural displays

and demonstrations in KagES' Cultural Day were Rey Romolor's Carolinian Food preparation; Betty Igisaia's coconut oil-making and weaving; Lino Olopai's rope learning; Janet Santos' bead making; Terry Somorang's mwar making; Emilio Ayuyu's herbal medicine; Manny Borja's Chamorro book display; Jenny Baek Huh's Korean kimchi; and the artifacts display by the Historic Preservation Office.

Arlynn Agastino, a fifth grader, admitted that the school's annual activity is among the most-awaited community events of her family. It is where, she said, they spend the whole day enjoying the games, rides, and stage presentations.

Among the ethnic demonstrations, she said the Tahitian group got her interest the most.

"I love watching how they dance..." she said.

Kenaleen Schardt, also a fifth grader, meantime said that she was amazed by the various products on display at the booths.

She said she is interested in knowing more about mwar and beads making.

NAVFAC Marianas Seabees lauded for support to Santa Rita students



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"Excellent Eagle" awards were presented to Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Marianas Self-Help Seabees for their tireless efforts in helping at-risk students at Harry S. Truman Elementary School, improve upon their academic confidence. The presentation, March 27, featured more than a dozen certificates, thank-you cards designed by the students, and a fiesta-style lunch courtesy of the faculty and staff. Pictured from left are Cmdr. Eric Hawn, NAVFAC Marianas operations officer, Principal Michael Meno, Harry S. Truman Elementary School and Builder 1st Class (SW) William Hillberg, community relations coordinator.

SANTA RITA, Guam—Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Marianas Self-Help Seabees were honored with "Excellent Eagle" awards for their contributions to the academic excellence of students at Harry S. Truman Elementary School in Santa Rita, during an awards ceremony last March 27.

NAVFAC Marianas Seabees have been helping students im-

prove upon their academic confidence as part of the "Howdy Partners" program.

"It is NAVFAC's goal to make meaningful contributions in our community," said Cmdr. Matt Suess, NAVFAC Marianas executive officer. "Our Seabees are committed to the students and to enhancing their lives through these one-to-one academic mentoring sessions."

Through the Navy's Adopt-

A-School program, NAVFAC Marianas and H.S. Truman Elementary School share a long and valuable partnership.

"The Seabees are role models for our children," said Michael Meno, school principal.

NAVFAC Marianas' mission is to strengthen combat readiness through military construction, installation management, and facility operations support. (PR)

Annuncio - Arongorong Announcement

YOUR COMMENTS ARE MOST WELCOME:

VR FY - 2010 State Plan Goals

Goal 1. Deliver quality and timely services to applicants and consumers.

Goal 2. Serve as an advocate for individuals with disabilities.

Goal 3. Continue to work closely with the Workforce Investment Board to maintain and improve the best features of our workforce development system and to initiate efforts to integrate services for consumers.

Goal 4. Facilitate and ensure the seamless transition of students with disabilities to employment or continued education.

SPIL Amendment to Current Goals:

Goal I) Increase the community's level of awareness of the independent living movement, individuals and systems advocacy;

Goal II) Provide certain independent living core services: the four core services and transportation services to individuals with significant disabilities.

For more information on the VR & SPIL State Plans, please contact:

Margarita R. Olopai-Taitano
OVR Director

Kaye Christian
SILC Chairperson

Jess Elameto
SRC Chairperson



The office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the statewide Independent Living Council



(SILC), will be conducting statewide public forums on FY 2008-2010 State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services and to amend the current State Plan form Independent Living (SPIL). YOU are ALL invited and encouraged to please participate in the scheduled public forums. The forums will provide opportunities for public comments on how well services are met and what need to be strengthened in our State Plans. Let us know how best the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation shall and should serve people with disabilities residing in Saipan, Tinian and Rota. What barriers exist that currently prevent our people with disabilities from getting or keeping a job. More importantly, recommend solutions to those barriers. Overall, how can OVR and our local communities work together or prepare, secure and maintain employment and promote independence for and among eligible people with disabilities?

Community Forum on VR & IL State Plan FY 2008-2010

TINIAN

March 31, 2009
TINIAN Aging Center

State Plan for Vocational
Rehabilitation at 5:30 p.m.

State Plan for Independent Living
at 6:35 to 7:35 p.m.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION: If you require special accommodation (e.g., large print, sign language interpreter) to participate in the public forums, please contact the OVR Council Liaison Magin Iginoef at least 2 days before the scheduled forums. Copies of the plans can be obtained and accessed at website & office.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
322-6537/8 (Voice) 322-6449 (TTY) 322-6536 Fax
PO Box 501521 Saipan, MP 96950 website: www.ovr.gov.mp

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'Limited resources, cultural practices limiting students'

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Limited resources and cultural practices are the two main factors identified as barriers to the success of middle and high school students in the CNMI.

This was the consensus of participants of last week's 2nd Annual Counselors' Conference. The gathering also emphasized the need to explore all avenues to meet the required and expected services to the students.

Leo Pangelinan, program manager at Northern Marianas College's Access Challenge Project, said it is one of the event's objectives to help counselors understand specific student population and help them enrich themselves to better serve the group.

There were over 50 participants in the event that was addressed by licensed psychologist Ron Meister, who served as the event's main speaker.

Pangelinan disclosed that culture was a notable barrier identified in the progress of students as shared by counselors.

"Some family members have different roles depending on their place in the family unit. If you're the eldest, you usually do take more responsibilities that sometimes limit your abil-

Live fire releases at FDM set

The Emergency Management Office in conjunction with U.S. Naval Forces Marianas (N3) Guam would like to inform the public that the U.S. Military Unit would be conducting Live Fire Releases CVW-9/13EBS on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla. The schedule dates and time are as follow:

■ March 27-31, 2009 from 8am-3am Live Fire Releases CVW-9.

■ April 1-3, 2009 from 8am-3am Live Fire Releases 13EBS.

The general locations of this activity will be on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla Training Area (R7201) a (10) nautical mile radius on all quadrants. Due to the danger imposed by this activity, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial is advising the general public especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators to stay away from this area during the time and dates indicated.

The cooperation and understanding of the general public is greatly appreciated.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the Emergency Management Office, Operation section at telephone numbers 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF Marine CHNL 16, and HF single side band radio on 52050. (PR)



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Counselors from different schools listen to one of the resource speakers talk about working with at-risk students during the Northern Marianas College's 2nd Annual Counselor's Conference held at the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio Friday.

ity to focus on school or school endeavors because they have familiar roles entirely separate from their being as a student," Pangelinan said.

In a presentation by Jennifer Furey-Maratita of the Community Guidance Center, she focused her discussion on the "barriers to success among Pacific island students."

Counselors were also taught

guidelines on working with at-risk students and understanding the referral process.

To motivate students to a career after high school, Tyce Mister of Marianas High School's Cooperative Education program gave valuable steps for counselors to effectively guide students and clients.

Meister, meanwhile, hopes to see a resolution to the lim-

ited resources provided to school counselors.

"I think the challenge counselors have on Saipan is [they are] hugely understaffed that in a lot of ways, the successful treatment of clients is not met," he said.

Meister said exploring possible grants to sustain these needs must be aggressively supported.

In his presentation about helping others and healing self, Meister said, "We have capable people here on island. We do all have the education and experience to help others and we need to continue educating ourselves. We need to continue look to science as well to find out what the research is so we can be informed as practitio-

ners to provide the best treatment possible."

The licensed psychologist lauded the NMC's effort of organizing the conference, through federal grant.

He encouraged the community and the agencies to continue extend assistance to better enhance the services provided by counselors.

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Gachapin and Mukku visit Rota

Popular Japanese TV characters Gachapin and Mukku recently visited Rota where they shot an episode of a show that will soon air in Fuji TV Kids.

According to Pacific Development, Inc. general manager Gordon Marciano, Gachapin and Mukku was welcomed well by Rota students and the rest of the island's community.

"The Rota community was very happy to know Gachapin and Mukku have made Rota their destination for fun in the sun and as a relaxing place to visit," he said.

Rota Mayor Joseph Inos presented Gachapin and Mukku with Rota's highest honor by bestowing on them the Tourism Ambassadors Award. He also asked both television characters to help promote the island as an ideal destination for Japanese tourists.

Gachapin and Mukku made several stops in Rota's famous sites and will broadcast their visit to Rota on Fuji TV Kids, which has over 30,000,000 viewers nationwide in Japan.

"They wanted to share with everyone the pristine and beautiful beaches and sights of Rota, they also planted a coconut tree as part of their way of respecting nature as well as asked everyone to continue to preserve the flora and fauna of Rota. They said their visit to Rota has been an adventure they won't easily forget. Gachapin and Mukku also thanked the many students and children that welcomed them," said Marciano.

Gachapin and Mukku also danced the night away at the Chamorro Village under the



The Fuji TV Kids characters are welcomed by Rota's schoolchildren.

stars and were invited to the San Isidro Fiesta to celebrate with everyone in Sinapalo.

Marciano said Gachapin and Mukku vowed to return to the CNMI's northernmost part in August to take part in another adventure tour of Rota.

While Gachapin and Mukku were visiting Rota, PDI was moving on their announcement



Gachapin, left, and Mukku frolic on one of Rota's pristine beaches.

for KNT's second charter flights schedules for 2009-2010 for Rota, as Marciano and fellow general manager Masanori Takahashi met with partners in the tourism industry along with the Rota community, Rota Arts Council, and its non-profit groups to confirm the date of the second charter flights. *(Saipan Tribune)*



Rota Mayor Joseph Inos poses with Gachapin and Mukku.

GCA '09-'10 enrollment ongoing

Grace Christian Academy's school year 2009-2010 registration for continuing students started on March 16, 2009 and it will run until April 3, 2009.

Continuing students and their siblings are guaranteed a slot until April 17, 2009, if the maximum number of class enrollment is not reached yet. Classes will be limited to a maximum of 25 students only or a combination class may be formed. Open enrollment be-

gins on April 20, 2009. Registration will be on a first come, first served basis.

GCA has been recently awarded re-accreditation by the International Accreditation Commission of Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) with the term of accreditation for kindergarten to 12th grade effective July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2014.

GCA admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic

origin. The same rights, privileges, programs, and activities are made available to all students at the school, regardless of their background.

The school is committed to excellence in various aspects of the child's education. Students are encouraged to discover their God-given potential and are provided with rigorous programs and opportunities for kindergarten 4 through 12th grade.

Interested families are encouraged to register on time as slots have already been filling up quickly. Enrollment packet is available at the registrar's office. The packet must be turned in along with all other required documents. A student is officially registered upon paying the registration fee and whose account is current.

GCA is located at Upper Navy Hill. For more information, contact the school at 322-3320/3850 or set up an appointment to visit our school. *(PR)*



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BELATED HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Belated birthday greetings go out to Mia Jones who celebrated her birthday yesterday, March 29. "Your life is a gift from God. Your gift back to God is what you do with your life. Happy 18th Birthday, darling Mia! Carpe Diem!



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Mary Ann Callejo is celebrating her birthday today, March 30. Greetings from Jamjam and her dear friends and co-workers at Coke.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go out to Josie G. Villanueva for recently passing the U.S. CPA board exams. God bless and may you reach your dreams and aspirations.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

MARCH 30, 1999

Benefits for foreign workers must also apply to locals: Law

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has approved a legislation that would allow local residents earning less than an hourly wage of \$5.15 to receive all benefits extended to foreign workers as mandated by existing laws. Public Law 11-74 says locals whose wages are still below the prevailing minimum level in the United States are entitled to receive in-kind or the cash equivalent of the full benefits provided to nonresidents such as subsidized food, housing, local transportation, health insurance and medical care. The legislation, introduced by Rep. Manuel A. Tenorio, gives resident workers the option to choose between the benefits or the cash compensation, whichever is higher.

NMHC gives Koblerville project a push

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation has agreed to move "slowly" on the multimillion-dollar Koblerville expansion project after completing evaluation on three prospective contractors of the 45 housing units, its corporate director said yesterday. The decision is a step to steer clear from potential protests that may delay the project viewed by government officials as an effort to spur the local economy through increased construction activities on the island. According to Marylou S. Ada, the construction management team hired by NMHC conducted comprehensive consultation last week with the three final bidders—Pac United, North Pacific Builders and Telesource—as part of its evaluation. "They are taking time to compile their reports because of the close ranking points between these prospective contractors," she explained in an interview.

MARCH 30, 2000

House weighs tax breaks, incentives for Continental

The House of Representatives is working out a proposal to grant tax breaks and other incentives to Continental Micronesia in hopes to help the carrier sell the CNMI in key Asian markets as well as to reduce fares between the islands and prime destinations. Its leadership, led by Speaker Benigno R. Fitial, met yesterday with a representative of the Guam-based carrier to discuss the plan which would remain under wraps pending final decision. Wally Dias, staff to the vice president of Continental Micronesia, welcomed the move, but added they still have to study details of the plan. "These type of actions are very pro-active and would be helpful. We're going to have to go back and work out the details of what that can actually accomplish," he told reporters after the meeting.

Renaming of Hopwood Jr. divides community

A proposal renaming Hopwood Junior High School after one of its pioneer teachers has elicited mixed reactions from the community, throwing the House Committee on Education in an imbroglio that could become a divisive public issue. Committee chair Rep. Brigida DLG. Ichihara said there is still no clear decision whether to pass the legislation naming the educational facility as Janet S. Tenorio Jr. High School even after conducting a public hearing Tuesday night. The committee will discuss the measure in the next few weeks and come up with a report by May. "There are still some issues that we must straighten out," the chairperson told in an interview yesterday.

MARCH 30, 2001

CHC sued for negligence

A Saipan couple is seeking justice to an unfortunate ordeal allegedly suffered by their child under the hands of the Commonwealth Health Center Intensive Care Unit last year. Parents Manuel C. Santos and Ana P. Cabrera through counsel Joseph A. Arriola lodged a \$100,000-civil action suit against CHC for complaints of gross negligence, alleging that CHC compromised the health and safety of their infant while under its care. The hospital, along with possibly six other medical personnel, are being accused of carelessness in the administration of their duties, allegedly causing the plaintiffs' child to experience lasting pain and suffering due to burns on her right hand. The parents of the infant are demanding for a jury trial to decide on the fate of the case pending before the Superior Court.

154 JROTC cadets take part in Spring Camp

By **MONEH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

One hundred and fifty four CNMI JROTC cadets representing Rota, Saipan Southern, Marianas High, Tinian, and Kagman high schools participated in a five-day Cadet Leadership Challenge held last week in Obyan.

The federal government provided JROTC programs in the Commonwealth \$20,000 to pay for the transportation cost of the cadets from Tinian and Rota as well as the meals for the participants, instructors, and chaperones.

The Cadet Leadership Challenge, also known as Spring Camp, ran from March 20 to 24 and provided cadets an opportunity to practice leadership skills in an unfamiliar environment and the opportunity to conduct adventure training activities not normally available at their home stations.

According to Lt. Col. Bob Gay, director of Army Instruction in the CNMI, cadets joined a daily regimen that included roll call, morning physical training, and a full day of events and nightly activities. These activities included rappelling, leadership reaction course, obstacle course, platoon drill, rope bridge construction, knot tying, land navigation, first aid, and academic challenge.

The cadets also visited historical World War II sites and met with CNMI federal park rangers chief Nancy Kelcher and her staff, Brian Piercy and Sam Martinson. The federal park rangers gave them an orientation on the American National Park Museum and a brief history of the CNMI and its people.

Marianas High School ca-

dets also briefed fellow JROTC camp teammates on the role Saipan played in World War II.

Gay said that Spring Camp also included three highly spirited contests such as cadet challenge PT test, interactive academic challenge, and platoon drill.

Rota High School emerged victorious in the platoon drill and PT test, while Tinian JROTC ruled the academic challenge.

Gay said the activities provided the cadets authentic learning activities and promoted invaluable skills in leadership, teamwork, problem solving, discipline, self-esteem, personal responsibility, making decisions, and sociability.

During the closing formation, Gay recognized and thanked the program instructors and chaperones for leading and caring for the cadets. He was especially proud of the camaraderie and spirit demonstrated by all the participants.

Gay said Spring Camp concluded with a five-mile road march from the Obyan campsite to the MHC JROTC classrooms.

For SSHS command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Echon, this year's camp activities provided students basic techniques in survival. In his fourth encampment, Echon noted the increasing number of participants and the well-developed activities for the event.

Cadet Capt. Carlene Moses, also of SSHS, said she will forever be grateful for the program, which developed her character and skills.

"It builds my character as a whole...[and] develops my confidence and ability to work and interact with others," she said.

A total of 42 cadets from MHS joined Spring Camp.

Cadet 2nd Lt. Khaydee Sampang said the whole experience was enriching.

"It's my first time in the camp and I truly learned a lot," she said, admitting that she was scared to try rappelling and navigational activities but was successful in the end.

"It enhanced our leadership skills and developed us into more active citizens. It tested our patience, confidence, and abilities," she said.

MHS cadet Capt. Alexis Bowie said the experiences and first-hand training at the camp would be helpful to students who plan to join the military after graduation.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMI cadets strike a pose while constructing a rope bridge during the Spring Camp on Saipan last week. A total of 154 students joined the activities that aimed to promote discipline and leadership skills among cadets.

Feds give DPW go signal to solicit bids for Cross Island road project

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration gave the go signal for the Department of Public Works to begin soliciting bids for the long-awaited Cross Island or Back Road improvement project, according to DPW secretary Diego B. Songsong.

The multi-million project, funded by DOT's FHWA, would create a new and safer highway from San Vicente to Capital Hill on Saipan.

Back Road has areas that have long been in hazardous conditions, and therefore pose danger to motorists and pedestrians.

Songsong said the solicitation will be out in the newspaper in a week or two.

"Finally, we got the approval from Federal Highway to proceed with Cross Island phase 1.

It's good for the CNMI. We've been pushing for this road project to come into reality and it's about time. I'm happy about it, and the governor has been pushing for this project to move forward," Songsong told Saipan Tribune yesterday.

This year, DPW is looking at several road improvement projects finally getting off the ground, the biggest of which is Rota's Route 11 or the Sabana Road and drainage improvement project with a price tag of \$2.788 million.

Just two weeks ago, DPW led the groundbreaking ceremony for the \$148,155.97 construction of the Laulau pathway (phase 1) in Kagman. The project, which is expected to be completed in 120 calendar days, involves the construction of a concrete pathway and the installation of pavement markings and signs.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

The price of realism

The strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan announced by President Obama Friday is conservative as well as bold. It is conservative because Obama chose to embrace many of the recommendations of U.S. military commanders and the Bush administration, based on the hard lessons of seven years of war. Yet it is bold—because, at a time of economic crisis and war-weariness at home, Obama is ordering not just a major increase in U.S. troops, but also an ambitious effort at nation-building in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. He is right to do it.

Few Americans would dispute Obama's description Friday of the continuing threat from Afghanistan and Pakistan's tribal areas. "Multiple intelligence estimates have warned that al-Qaida is actively planning attacks on the U.S. homeland from its safe haven in Pakistan," he said. "And if the Afghan government falls to the Taliban—or allows al-Qaida to go unchallenged—that country will again be a base for terrorists who want to kill as many of our people as they possibly can." The goal he stated was similarly simple and clear: "to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaida in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future."

What distinguishes the president's plan—and opens him to criticism from some liberals as well as conservatives—is its recognition that U.S. goals cannot be achieved without a major effort to strengthen the economies and political institutions of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Bush administration tried to combat the al-Qaida threat with limited numbers of U.S. and NATO troops, targeted strikes against militants, and broad, mostly ineffective, aid programs. It provided large sums of money to the Pakistani army, with few strings attached, in the hope that action would be taken against terrorist camps near the Afghan border. The strategy failed: The Taliban has only grown stronger, and both the Afghan and Pakistani governments are dangerously weak.

The lesson is that only a strategy that aims at protecting and winning over the populations where the enemy operates, and at strengthening the armies, judiciaries, and police and political institutions of Afghanistan, can reverse the momentum of the war and, eventually, allow a safe and honorable exit for U.S. and NATO troops. This means more soldiers, more civilian experts and much higher costs in the short term: Obama has approved a total of 21,000 more U.S. troops and several hundred additional civilians for Afghanistan, and Friday he endorsed two pieces of legislation that would provide Pakistan with billions of dollars in non-military aid as well as trade incentives for investment in the border areas. More is likely to be needed: U.S. commanders in Afghanistan hope to obtain another brigade of troops and a division headquarters in 2010, and to double the Afghan army again after the expansion now underway is completed in 2011. Obama should support those plans.

Such initiatives are not the product of starry-eyed idealism or an attempt to convert either country into "the 51st state" but of a realistic appreciation of what has worked—and failed—during the past seven years. As Obama put it, "It's far cheaper to train a policeman to secure his or her own village or to help a farmer seed a crop than it is to send our troops to fight tour after tour of duty with no transition to Afghan responsibility." That effort will be expensive and will require years of steadiness. But it offers the best chance for minimizing the threat of Islamic jihadism—to this country and to the world.

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Why we can and must prosper again: Part I

This year 2009 is a year for self examination. We are being forced to make several momentous decisions which will markedly affect our future. Three major ones are: 1. the election of a governor and new legislature; 2. how to best adapt to the federalization act, and 3. how to turn our sagging economy around. We will discuss the first two at another time. Today let us focus on how we are going to rebuild our economy. Much of what you will read I have repeatedly said before. However I want to reinforce the message until it becomes a reality.

Before we can plan for the future, we must review how we came to be in these dire straits. Today's dilemma did not happen overnight. It is the result of many years of mismanaging our economy and of neglecting our most precious asset—a local workforce trained in work attitudes and risk-taking. Unless we change the damage done to our people by the insensitive actions of our government and its greed for self-preservation, we will never regain prosperity.

We cannot rely on, and must not rely on, outside investors to save us. We must train our people to develop our own industries. All countries today that are prosperous are doing exactly that. A nation's strength lies in its people, not in its assets. After a time a nation's assets become depleted, but the skills of its people will create new assets.

In previous years our economy grew not from our own efforts but from the impetus of outside investors. Remember the glory days of the garment industry and hotel building by Japanese companies? These outside driving forces have been greatly reduced for several years. Today if we wish to rebuild the previous prosperity we enjoyed, we must make the improvements from our own efforts. We must come to understand who we are and understand what our assets are and how to utilize them.

We know the garment industry, while prospering for itself, is no longer an industry. The Japanese investors have now left us and as a result our tourism industry is sagging badly. For a time both industries proved to be highly profitable. Both paid high taxes. As a result the government hired many "non-essential" workers who refused to work for the minimum wages.

In what it considered clever political moves, the government increased the wages of the public sector while making sure that the private sector wages were kept low so that the two above industries could flourish. It also increased chances for the government during that period to remain in power. It bought its patronage through jobs to its loyal followers. Today many of them are in jeopardy of being laid off because the party is over.

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.



Unfortunately the garment industry contained seeds for self-destruction while the tourist industry isolated itself from the private sector. Simply put, neither industry encouraged the development of a local workforce. Both industries preferred to bring in their own help. And the government assisted them without realizing the negative efforts it was creating on our local workforce.

During these days of prosperity many local people flocked to join the government where wages were higher and working conditions more lax. They also enjoyed benefits of one of the most generous retirement plans in the world. Where else in the world than in the CNMI do government employees earn more than private sector employees and enjoy a bountiful retirement plan as early as less than 40 years old? A fall out of all of this is that many of these government workers must now be furloughed.

The ones with no political connections drifted into the garment industry to fill the minimum quota of local hire to satisfy the labor law. Rarely were any of these "token" employees given any training or responsibilities. They were simply tolerated as a necessary evil and expense.

The tourist industry brought in its own employees and employed the few locals it needed to fulfill the quota requirement. Nonresident workers filled the jobs of maintaining the hotels and doing other menial work. Again few locals were ever trained in the hospitality industry. Why should they when there were plenty non-resident workers available at low wages.

Both industries needed many employees. Our government, with influence from its political connections, was anxious to accommodate. However instead of encouraging our local people to apply for jobs in both industries, it opened the flood-gates for a huge influx of non-resident workers at the benefit of our local people. It further discouraged them from applying for work by keeping wages low.

See WHY on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

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A tax plan charities can support

Some of the nation's largest charities—and the lobbyists they pay to represent them—have been hyperventilating over President Obama's proposal to marginally roll back the amount of the tax deduction that the very wealthiest Americans can take for donating to charity. Of course, conservatives who oppose any tax hikes for the rich also oppose it.

While these voices have created the impression that all nonprofit organizations oppose the plan, the reality is that many charitable organizations, especially ones that serve low-income populations, such as the one I run, strongly support it.

According to the Urban Institute-Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center, the proposal would affect only 1.2 percent of U.S. households—those in the top two tax brackets. Nearly 99 percent of households would be unaffected. The plan would merely restore the deduction rate to Reagan-era levels.

Since the largest donors (such as Bill Gates and Warren Buffett) already give more than they can deduct, and numerous studies show that tax deductions are a relatively minor reason that the wealthiest Americans donate to charities, total charitable contributions are likely to decline by only about 1.3 percent if the proposal is enacted, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities calculates.

Combined with other progressive Obama tax proposals, that change would not only start to redress the inequality gap that has engulfed America in recent decades but would also help to pay for many effective domestic programs, including efforts that fight hunger and improve nutrition; boost public education; improve health care and make it more affordable; and create jobs for low- and

middle-income families. In other words, the funding would greatly reduce struggling families' need for charitable aid.

When the wealthiest Americans donate to charities, they are most likely to give to universities, hospitals and cultural institutions from which they and their families may benefit. Such organizations often have budgets and executive salaries equal to or larger than those of mid-size corporations, stretching the definition of "nonprofit group."

While anti-poverty organizations such as mine do receive some funding from the wealthiest Americans (for which we are extremely grateful), the bulk of our private donations comes from middle-income families.

Even if the largest tax deductions are kept in place only for anti-poverty organizations, a compromise that would directly benefit groups such as mine, there are at least two reasons I still don't think that would be wise public policy:

First, such tax deductions are a highly inefficient way to fund social programs. It is far more cost-effective for the government to simply increase supplemental nutrition benefits (formerly food stamps) that are immediately redeemed at for-profit food stores than it is to give massive tax deductions that only marginally increase donations to feeding charities, which then have to split such donated money between administrative costs and food purchases.

Second, voluntary private charity is a less equitable way to solve community problems. While many people assume that the rich amass their wealth on their own, the truth is that their business interests are almost always aided by public efforts such as roads, bridges

By JOEL BERG

Special to The Washington Post

Joel Berg is executive director of the New York City Coalition Against Hunger and the author of "All You Can Eat: How Hungry Is America?"



and ports through which they ship their goods or public schools that educate their workforces. Given that even the wealthiest benefit greatly from this modern "public commons," it is wrong to give them unilateral power to decide whether their taxpayer-subsidized donations should go to, say, well-heeled operas or lavish care of pets rather than to organizations that meet more pressing communal needs.

It is fashionable these days to say that "the community," not government, should solve social problems. Yet no nonprofit leader, myself included, was elected by the community as a whole. Elected officials, whether we like them or not, are picked by voting citizens. In America, the government is the most legitimate voice of the entire community.

The Obama administration should stick to its guns in fighting for tax equity, and Congress should support the effort. If charities want to prove that they value the public interest over their self-interest, they, too, should get on board.

Israel's step back from peace

Emphasizing diplomacy and engagement over isolation and confrontation, President Obama has spoken eloquently of a new era of American leadership. Of the changes he has promised, the most important to Palestinians is his commitment to reinvigorating the Middle East peace process.

Resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remains crucial to achieving stability and peace in the Middle East as well as to advancing vital U.S. interests. The Obama administration clearly understands this, prioritizing the peace process as part of a more integrated approach to U.S. policy in the region. America's renewed commitment to brokering a just and lasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis offers a measure of hope to Palestinians living under the weight of occupation. But it also comes at a time when Israel's own commitment to peace is in doubt after the formation of a right-wing coalition government.

Peace is not a word that sits comfortably with the Israeli right, which will dominate Israel's new government, even with Labor's decision to join it. Among its ranks are those who have long opposed peace with Palestinians, no matter the cost; who use the cover of religion to advocate extremist views; and who have supported the expulsion of Palestinians or now devise loyalty tests designed to achieve the same result.

Many of this government's members exemplify some of the worst traditions in Israeli politics, traditions that find common cause in advocating the expansion of Israel at the expense of Palestinian rights and independence.

One irony not lost on Palestinians is that incoming Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself rejects virtually all the preconditions that the international community demanded of the newly elected Palestinian unity government in 2007, given his refusal to formally endorse the two-state solution and commit to implementing past agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Rather than ending the occupation, Netanyahu has proposed an

"economic peace" that would seek to normalize and better manage it. Instead of a viable Palestinian state, his vision extends no further than a series of disconnected cantons with limited self-rule.

Palestinians have not engaged in years of negotiations to see them fail. But neither is our patience unlimited. If efforts to reinvigorate the peace process are to have any chance of success, three factors will be crucial.

The first is intent. Palestinians and Israelis must renew their commitment to the vision of two states existing side by side in peace and security.

Since 1988, when the PLO made the historic decision to formally accept the two-state solution as the basis for a negotiated settlement with Israel, this vision has been at the heart of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, and it has remained our consistent position throughout negotiations.

The new Israeli government must unequivocally affirm its support for the two-state solution and the establishment of a viable, independent and fully sovereign Palestinian state based on 1967 borders, and it must commit to past agreements between Israel and the PLO. Without these commitments, Palestinians have no partner for peace.

The second factor goes to the heart of credibility. By repeatedly violating its obligations under previous agreements, Israel has undermined the very credibility of the peace process. Restoring that credibility is vital.

This requires that Israel implement an immediate and complete freeze on settlement activity, including all natural growth and the construction of Israel's wall, in keeping with both international law and its obligations under the 2003 "road map." Without a settlement freeze, there will be no two-state solution left to speak of.

Israel must also lift its crippling regime of closures and restore normal movement in and out of, as well as within, the occupied Palestinian territory. Checkpoints, Israel's wall, the permit system it imposes on Palestinians and other restrictions on movement frustrate Palestinian

By SAEB ERAKAT

Special to The Washington Post

The writer is chief Palestinian negotiator.



life, fragment Palestinian society and strangle our economy.

Tied to this is the urgent need to reopen Gaza's border crossings to allow the movement of goods and people in and out of Gaza, especially desperately needed humanitarian supplies and reconstruction materials.

The third factor concerns accountability. A credible enforcement mechanism designed to hold both parties accountable for their obligations under previous agreements must be established by the "Quartet" of the United States, the United Nations, the European Union and Russia. And America must serve as the honest broker capable of creating a level playing field between Palestinians and Israelis during talks.

Fortunately, a sound basis for moving the process forward exists, one that complements America's drive for a comprehensive regional peace. First proposed in 2002, the Arab Peace Initiative offers Israel full normalization with 57 Arab and Muslim states in return for an end to Israel's occupation of Arab lands and a just and agreed-upon solution for Palestinian refugees.

The peace process lives on borrowed time. With its credibility at stake, it will not survive another round of failed negotiations — and neither will the two-state solution. It is in this context that the choices made by Prime Minister Netanyahu will be judged. And it is in this context that the promise of change that President Obama offers becomes so important.

WHY

From Page 10

Meanwhile the government steadily raised the salaries of its own employees blatantly. Who could blame our local workforce for refusing to work for low wages?

So the party went on and the fortunate ones benefited through huge taxes. Happy times were here for the select few. The rest of us collected food stamps and drank away our rejection. The end result is that our economy was controlled on the whim and actions of outsiders. And as long as the odds were in their favor, we shared some of the harvest. But all too soon the tide changed and we were left to fend for ourselves. As a result look at where we are today. We had forgotten a basic rule in science: for all action there is a counteraction. We never considered what that would be. We had built our economy on sand.

Why didn't anyone in the CNMI see the direction we were head-

ing toward? When the garment industry began its exodus, why didn't anyone question if we could become garment manufacturers for the U. S. military who spends over a billion dollars a year on clothing? To date, Puerto Rico, a commonwealth like the CNMI, receives over \$400,000,000.00 per year of military garment contracts. The CNMI receives zero. Why? No one has ever approached the military. We didn't even bother to ask the American garment manufacturers to do a joint-venture. Because all U.S. military garments must be made in U.S. territory, we possibility could still have a garment industry.

Hindsight is a great opportunity to examine good and bad points. Now that the garment industry is only a memory and the tourist industry is on the ropes grasping for breath, it is time to look to the future. It is time to assess our strengths and decide on a course of action.

As we search for direction, let us never forget that the dilemma was caused through our own doing. It was brought about by greed of the few, and it was made worst by the total lack of planning to

develop our "human capital." We acted as parasites on the back of foreign investors, taking from them and not giving.

Despite the pessimism echoed by many citizens, I see and feel great challenges awaiting us. Next week I will discuss the assets we possess that can and will catapult us into the winner's circle again. We have a bountiful ocean, a fertile soil, breathtaking scenery, a consistently warm climate, a young and eager to work population, and proximity to a huge market. Let us blend these ingredients to create a new era seasoned with a tireless strong will and desire.

This time by careful planning and by our own labor, we will build a strong and prosperous economy. The money is available. The assets are here. The workforce is waiting to be trained and is willing to become risk takers. Let us screw up our determination and will. Let's create the desire and the rest will follow. Let's do it!






Firmly imprint in our minds the words of Napoleon Hill as stated in his book *Think and Grow Rich*:

"Whatever the MIND OF MAN can CONCEIVE and BELIEVE it can ACHIEVE."

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

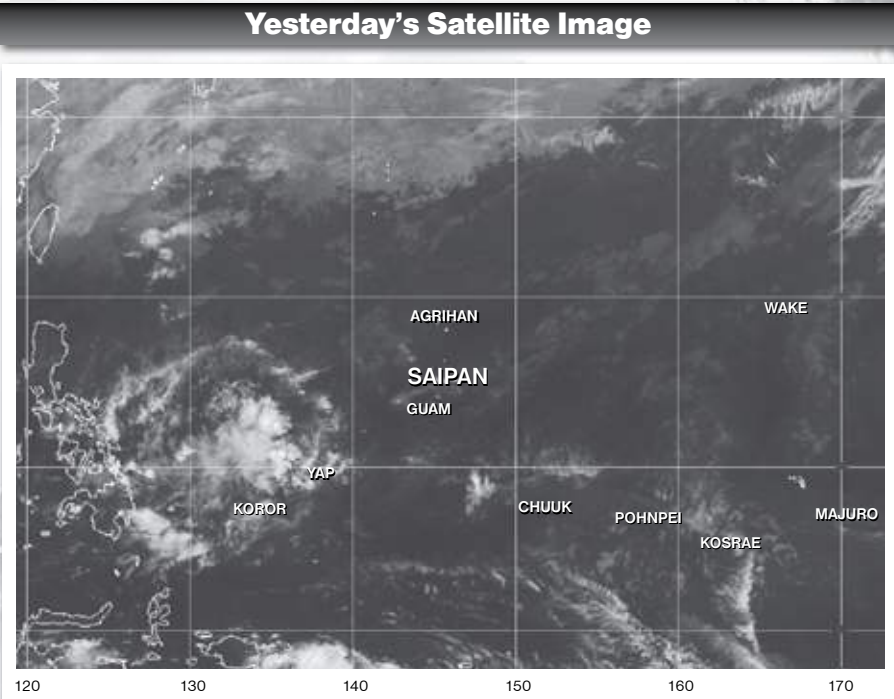
5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

Micronesia		
Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84 ▼75
Palau	Sunny	▲87 ▼77
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲88 ▼76
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲88 ▼78
Pohnpei	Mostly Sunny	▲85 ▼74
Kosrae	Mostly Sunny	▲89 ▼76
Majuro	Mostly Sunny	▲85 ▼76

Around The Globe		
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲72 ▼58
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲48 ▼33
Hong Kong	Showers	▲68 ▼63
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲76 ▼69
London	Cloudy	▲54 ▼41
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲74 ▼52
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲85 ▼75
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲80 ▼62
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲84 ▼71
New York	Partly Sunny	▲55 ▼40
Osaka	Cloudy	▲51 ▼41
Paris	Dreary	▲50 ▼43
Pusan	Partly Sunny	▲54 ▼40
Rome	Rain	▲60 ▼40
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲55 ▼38
San Francisco	Sunny	▲66 ▼50
Seoul	Showers	▲47 ▼27
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲55 ▼42
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲63 ▼42

Tides		
Saipan Harbor		
3:58 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
9:15 AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
4:26 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
11:16 PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line enters the discussion area north of Wake Island at 25N167E and extends southwestward to east of the Marianas at 15N151E. Scattered showers are found along and up to 220 miles northwest of the shear line. A low-level trough runs eastward from Mindanao to a weak circulation centered just west of Koror at 7N132E then continues southeastward as a near-equatorial trough to end at EQ150E, aided by upper-level divergence. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring in the vicinity of the circulation over Koror but west of Yap within 85 miles of a line from 11N130E to 11N134E to 8N136E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers east of Kosrae within 80 miles of a line from 2N165E to 6N169E and southeast of Wake Island between 11N and 20N from 168E to 172E.

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:14 AM	6:29 PM	Today	8:31 AM	9:56 PM
Tuesday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM	Tuesday	9:26 AM	10:59 PM
Wednesday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM	Wednesday	10:26 AM	
Thursday	6:12 AM	6:30 PM	Thursday	11:29 AM	12:01 AM
Friday	6:11 AM	6:30 PM	Friday	12:32 PM	12:59 AM

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A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
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Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 12, 2009					
DEPARTURES			ARRIVALS		
Saipan-Rota			Rota-Saipan		
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm 1,7	CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am 5,6
Saipan-Guam			Guam-Saipan		
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am Daily	CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am 1,2,3,4,7
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am Daily	CO9598	2:30am	4:00am 5,6 via Rota
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm 1,7 via Rota	CO9596	7:00am	7:50am Daily
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6	CO9600	10:20am	11:10am Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm Daily	CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm Daily	CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm Daily	CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita			Narita-Saipan		
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am Daily	NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm 2,3,4,5,6,7	NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1 2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm Daily	NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1 Daily
Guam-Narita			Narita-Guam		
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm Daily	NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm Daily	NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm Daily
Saipan-Osaka			Osaka-Saipan		
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am 1,4,6	OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1 3,5,7
Guam-Osaka			Osaka-Guam		
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm Daily	NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			Nagoya-Saipan		
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am Daily	NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1 Daily
Guam-Nagoya			Nagoya-Guam		
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm Daily	NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm Daily
Saipan-Incheon			Incheon-Saipan		
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am 1	OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm Daily
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7	OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1 7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am 1,4,6 via Osaka	OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1 3,5,7
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm Daily	OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan			Busan-Saipan		
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am 1,4,5,7	OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Shanghai			Shanghai-Saipan		
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am 2,6	FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1 1,5
Rota-Guam			Guam-Rota		
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm 1,7	CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am 5,6
Guam-Palau			Palau-Guam		
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm 1,7	CO 954	2:30am	5:25am 1,2
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm 3,5	CO 892	2:35am	5:30am 4,6
Palau-Manila			Manila-Palau		
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm 3,5	CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1 3,5
Guam-Manila			Manila-Guam		
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm 3,5 via Koror	CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1 3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm Daily	CO 934	11:10pm	4:05am+1 Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am 1,2,4,6,7	PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			Manila-Nagoya		
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm Daily	NW 72	6:30am	11:05am Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			Hongkong-Incheon		
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm Daily	OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm Daily	OZ 7183	12:45am	4:05am 1,4,6
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm 5,7	OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm Daily
Narita-Manila			Manila-Narita		
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm Daily	NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Autism Open Invitational

I am sure we could find a way to have Tiger Woods come over to tee off with a powerful drive down one of our fairways towards a dramatic putt put on any of our year-round green greens. Larissa and Marissa, Dolores and Joann, Julie and Bobbi, Lolita and Catalina, Vi and Maggie, and all the ladies of the Autism Society would volunteer to caddy if necessary should we hold an Autism Open Invitational Golf Tournament on island. Wouldn't Laolao Bay in Kagman just be ideal for such a happening?

Will this happen? Not this month, nor likely anytime soon, anyway. But the Office of the Governor tomorrow is scheduled to declare April as an Autism Awareness month in the CNMI. April 2 is also World Autism Awareness Day in many parts of the globe. The "open" our title points to is a feature of the month's festivities including an Open House of the Autism Society at NMPASI on Pale Arnold Rd. that entails and promotes openness to the physical, emotional, intellectual and decisional aspects of human capability—an open body, an open heart, an open mind, and open arms.

The Autism Society focuses on the children and their families, on their wholeness rather than on a diagnosed disability. Evolutionary models point to the impermanence of any condition, that life's survival is a celebrated arrival but that the odyssey of living is best relished on the journey and not on the allure of any perceived destination. The journey of humankind so far has been known for its resilience and adaptability to environmental and psycho-social changes. From this perspective, the Autism Society looks at the ASD diagnosis as a reality check to be celebrated rather than as a deficiency to be fixed or a problem to be solved.

We are open to the windows of our bodies. As part of the month's awareness campaign, Tom Thornburgh of NMPASI is running sessions on the Rugged Outdoors Physical Experiential System (ROPES) of the Challenge Masters (Outward Bound) program at various school locations as well as in the post-Easter Saturday Open House of April 18. This takes our consciousness back to our basic relationship to our bodies. What we do with our sight and hearing, our taste buds and touching, and our smelling defines our character.

Autism month will hammer on a holistic image of being human. We begin with the affirmation of our body, which after all is what generates laughter and fuels appetite. The sense perception need to see the image in order to discern meaning, to listen to sound in order to hear messages, to taste flavor in order to savor significance, to touch texture in order to feel sentiments, and yes, to smell the odor in order to sense ambience.

Our first attempt at autism awareness in 2001 was a symposium and it served its function. Recognizing the pedagogical function of

play today, we may start designing *symploysium* sessions. A Chinese colleague reminded me that "po" in Putunghua means "bad," so *symploysium* would definitely trump *symposium* any day! Allowing for playful movements of the body and our senses is an affirmation at once of the depth, breadth, height and the lightness of being, something our OTs might begin paying attention to. The Open House design adheres and points to this understanding of the mindful playfulness of our children's upbringing.

The fact is, the neuro-medical condition of autism had been and continues to be heralded in alarmist and anxiety-laden terms such as disorder, dysfunction, disability and others. Autism parents refuse to be tyrannized by despair.

The families of ASD-diagnosed persons in STaRPO/PACA avoided the defeatist and confrontational stance that many have

The Autism Society focuses on the children and their families, on their wholeness rather than on a diagnosed disability. Evolutionary models point to the impermanence of any condition, that life's survival is a celebrated arrival but that the odyssey of living is best relished on the journey and not on the allure of any perceived destination. The journey of humankind so far has been known for its resilience and adaptability to environmental and psycho-social changes.

taken towards the conditions of "disabilities" and did not hesitate to share what they knew among themselves; they learned how to best utilize the resources of institutions mandated to serve the developmentally disabled, and leaned on the synergy that develops when forces link-up, lean-on, and interdepend on each other.

Open hearts practices have been evident without even calling it by that name. A local family with an ASD-diagnosed son linked up with a non-local family whose son has a chromosome-X syndrome,

In an essay in the April issue of the British magazine Prospect, Jamie Bartlett of the think tank Demos and McGill University psychologist Michael King contend that violent extremism often appeals to young Muslims because it seems to offer "adventure, excitement and notoriety." Puncturing this swashbuckling image is critical in the fight against terrorism, they say.

"Al-Qaida allows a young nobody to become a heroic warrior; an Islamic James Bond," the authors write. They cite research showing that members of terrorist cells tend to be young men with little religious training beyond "a few cut-and-paste lines" of jihadi literature. The answer is to strip away the mystique and show that the

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section



allowing the former to advocate for the latter when it was efficacious to do so, and the latter gaining enough hope that they "shall overcome" even in an alien and strange land. Noting that responses to those diagnosed with down syndrome, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy were where the value of hidden-ness was observed more than the virtue of openness, where rebuke of 'aberrant' behavior came first before acceptance of the mystery and wonder of just being a person, the parents chose the proactive path.

A paradigm shift occurred that affirms our open minds. DNA findings that humans across the globe are, at least, 97 percent similar in genetic make-up and *homo sapiens* common ancestry to Africa points to our shared resilience at survival and capacity to develop and adapt to varied environments.

While we celebrate our commonality, we vigilantly protect the treasures of our diversity. Nowhere is the folly of the disastrous dichotomy between being exclusive vs. inclusive to be more evident than in dealing with a condition like autism. As an aside, PACA realized early that it can not divorce itself from the issues and concerns of the developmentally 'disabled' community so it reinvented itself as STaRPO and deliberately invited parents of children with cerebral palsy and down syndrome. Autism Society, given the wide spectrum that ASD covers, has also carefully paid attention to the larger community rather than be an exclusive enclave that it can easily become.

That is where the open arms theme is not only relevant, but critical as members of the AS-CNMI play a crucial role in the CNMI Commission on Autism and its mission. We can no longer have the luxury of asking what the government is doing; we have been seconded to be part of that governance! In the exercise of their freedom, demonstrated self-reliance and vaunted self-motivation, the future of many ASD-diagnosed persons in the Commonwealth now lies in the parents' hands.

The activities for the Autism month will be coordinated by the AS-CNMI with the active support of the tri-agency collaboration of UCCEDD, CDD and NMPASI. For scheduled events, check your newspapers, or call NMPASI @ 235 7273/4.

Want to fight terrorists? Try mocking them

By **CARLOS LOZADA**
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WASHINGTON—With the Taliban regaining strength and Osama bin Laden still on the loose, President Obama announced a new strategy Friday to "disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaida" in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In addition to new funding for Pakistan's democratic institutions and more U.S. troops to train the Afghan security forces, here's another anti-terrorism tactic the president might consider: Make al-Qaida boring.

life of an Islamic extremist "more like that of a petty criminal than a secret agent."

Bartlett and King offer an unorthodox solution: If you mock the extremists, their appeal will diminish. For example, the authors note approvingly that British satirist Chris Morris is planning a film on Islamic extremism.

American pranksters are on the case, too: U.S. Central Command has invited Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert to entertain U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf. The location, however, remains undisclosed. As Colbert put it on his show, "All I will say is that there will be sand, and people who wish we would leave."

Letter to the Editor

Furlough is ridiculous!

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial should not implement the plan to lay off some of the inessential government employees. First, why did he agree to hire and approve these people's personnel action? Now he will put their lives in jeopardy by implementing the furlough to reduce costs and save some money for the government?

This is a bad idea for the governor to do because it is like putting every individual's life in a precarious situation. At this point in time, there are a lot of government employees who have debts to take care of and the governor should reconsider his strategy in implementing this measure.

I pretty much doubt this action will protect the general public's interest, especially their welfare as a whole. The governor should be more creative by finding an alternative solution, instead of allowing the furlough to happen. Honestly, the people are suffering at this moment. It's enough that the governor already implemented a reduction of hours among government employees in the past few years.

I am aware the governor has the authority to furlough the employees but in all honesty this is not the right time for him to take such action. Thousands of employees will be affected by the furlough when it's enacted and all of these individuals will become jobless. The governor should identify other resources that will bring in more funding in order to resolve some of his obligations.

Abigail Manglona
Guam

Paradise lost

If Marpi is going to become a homestead area, Saipan will lose the most beautiful thing about it. Marpi is the pride and joy of Saipan. It is what makes Saipan stand out as a tourist destination. Marpi should remain untouched and not become a developed area. There are many other parts of Saipan that should be used for homesteads instead. Kagman has so many abandoned homesteads that could be used. Why not use Capital Hill and Talofofa? Marpi is the only place where people can truly get away from the rest of Saipan and go back to nature. There are indigenous trees, hilitai, and birds that will be harmed. It's bad enough that Marpi is now home to our landfill. Marpi will lose its beauty if it gets developed over the years.

Kalabera Cave should not be developed as well. Kalabera should be left the way it has been for thousands of years. It is a very significant place for Chamorros. There are Taotaomona drawings there. As Chamorros, descendants of Taotaomonas, we should honor our ancestors and leave Kalabera the way it is. Use the CIP funding to fix our roads (Middle Road need center lanes, Kagman 3 and 4 need paving, Back Road needs fixing, etc.) instead of wasting it on developing Kalabera Cave. *Biba Marianas! Fanoge Chamorro para i tanota!*

Jesse Torres
Kagman, Saipan

Business

Hard times mean new opportunities for Big Oil

HOUSTON (AP)—Plunging crude prices have begun to play out in favor of Western oil companies in one regard, giving them leverage with oil-rich countries that only months ago had no reason to compromise.

Countries like Venezuela, Libya and Russia have kept a tight grip on their vast oil reserves in recent years as crude prices soared above \$100 per barrel, translating into big revenues. Much of that money, rather than going back into the oil industry, was spent on unrelated political and social programs.

At \$50 per barrel, these countries are far more constrained and can't adequately fund some oil and gas projects.

Experts say Western oil corporations, who stockpiled cash when profits were flush, can shift operations to any corner of the globe and have the capital that allows them to strike deals with state-controlled producers on very favorable terms. When that might happen is uncertain, but energy experts and some executives have said deals are imminent if prices remain at current levels.

The new opportunities for the major Western oil companies come even as the United States attempts to shift away from fossil fuels. Just this week, President Barack Obama said the nation must free itself "from the dangerous dependence on foreign oil."



BANNED DETERGENT

Employee Jesse McCauley, arm only in photo, helps customer Arlette Popiel find a bottle of natural dishwasher rinse aid at the Huckleberries Fresh Market area inside a Rosauers Supermarket in Spokane, Wash. on Tuesday, March 24, 2009. Dishwasher detergents containing phosphates have been banned in Spokane County since July 2008.

Still, the International Energy Agency and other forecasters have said fossil fuels will be the primary source of

global energy for decades to come, and national oil companies control roughly three-quarters of the world's proven re-

serves. So, for Western oil companies, it makes sense to strike deals in places where they know there's crude.

When oil was \$100 a barrel, "these national companies were saying, 'What the hell do we need the majors for? We've got gobs of cash,'" said Amy Jaffe, an energy expert at Rice University's James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy.

Now, some fields are not economical to develop with oil at current prices. In other cases, crumbling infrastructure makes the work more difficult and expensive, if not impossible, for state-run companies.

"As the economy and prices collapsed, it's a different picture," Jaffe said.

Chevron Corp., Royal Dutch Shell PLC and others have said they expect greater access to reserves in countries with nationalized oil and gas industries, something that could help them stem declining production.

But there are risks involved.

As recently as two years ago things went so badly in oil-rich Venezuela that Exxon Mobil and ConocoPhillips fled the country, leaving behind billions in assets. Libya's Moammar Gadhafi threatened earlier this year to nationalize his oil industry—again.

The reaction to oil prices, which recently hit five-year lows, is varied by country.

White House planning more auto financial aid

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Obama administration was finishing work on a plan to give more financial aid to two Detroit automakers in return for tough cost-cutting measures that will ensure the companies' survival.

President Barack Obama's auto industry task force was expected to offer additional aid to General Motors Corp. and Chrysler LLC while setting firm deadlines for the companies to get concessions from their stakeholders.

GM and Chrysler, which employ

about 140,000 workers in the U.S., have already received \$17.4 billion in government loans to survive the economic downturn and the worst decline in auto sales in 27 years. GM is seeking another \$16.6 billion, while Chrysler wants \$5 billion more.

With the companies running out of money heading into April, any short-term aid would help the auto manufacturers maintain their operations while they seek concessions. Administration officials declined to comment on the

plan Saturday.

Task force members have said bankruptcy could still be an option for GM and Chrysler if their management, workers, creditors and shareholders failed to make sacrifices. The conditions could be more stringent than the loan terms set by the outgoing Bush administration in December, officials have said.

Obama was scheduled to announce his decision on Monday at the White House.

Obama seeks to rein in Wall Street, broaden agenda

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama and congressional Democrats are stepping through an economic minefield and sowing the ground with unprecedented initiatives that capitalize on the recession to rein in Wall Street and broaden government's reach.

Nothing better illustrated this watershed than the bustle and scope of the past few days.

Obama's treasury secretary, Timothy Geithner, touched off a Wall Street rally with a long-awaited plan to help

rid banks of their toxic assets. Geithner rolled out a comprehensive overhaul of financial regulations in hopes of avoiding another meltdown. Congressional Democrats worked to put their own imprint on a budget full of ambition but saddled with deficits.

In each case, the policies showed a pumped up role for government: leveraging money from the private sector, taking over troubled institutions, better governing ever-expanding financial markets, and promising

greater influence over health care, energy and education.

Just as government proved it could flex its muscle, it also showed where it could wilt.

After days of fuming over bonuses paid by insurer American International Group Inc., Obama and members of Congress checked their tantrums and moved on. The House and Senate budgets embraced Obama's policy priorities, but lawmakers delayed difficult decisions on how to pay for them.

European protesters march in G20 rallies

LONDON (AP)—Thousands of people marched through European cities Saturday to demand jobs, economic justice and environmental accountability, kicking off six days of protest and action planned in the run-up to the G20 summit next week in London.

In London, more than 150 groups threw their backing behind the "Put People First" march. Police said around 35,000 attended the demonstration, snaking their way across the city toward Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park. Protest organizers said they wanted leaders from the world's top 20 economies to adopt a more transparent and democratic economic recovery plan.

Brendan Barber, who heads an umbrella group for Britain's unions, told assembled protesters in London's Hyde Park that the G20 needed to "take actions to lay the foundation for a better world."

"If we can generate fabulous wealth, as we can, then surely we can learn

how to distribute that wealth more fairly. If we can unleash a technological revolution then surely we can ensure that everyone on this planet gets the food, the shelter and the health care that they need," he said.

Not all demonstrators focused on the economic main message. Some chanted "Free, free, Palestine." One man dressed in a banana suit waved a sign reading: "Bananas for Justice."

Big protests were also held in Germany. Around 15,000 people gathered in Berlin, and a demonstration also was held in Frankfurt, Germany's banking capital, under the slogan: "We won't pay for your crisis."

Demonstrators in Berlin sported headbands reading "pay for it yourselves" and some carried a black coffin topped with red roses symbolizing what they said was the death of capitalism.

Some protesters in Berlin skirmished with police toward the end of the demonstration, and the windows of some police cars were broken.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

US Vice President: no plans to scrap Cuba embargo

VINA DEL MAR, Chile (AP)—U.S. Vice President Joe Biden said Saturday that the United States is not planning to lift its trade embargo on Cuba. Biden, who was in the Chilean resort city of Vina del Mar for a summit of center-left leaders from Latin America and Europe, replied "no" when asked by reporters if Washington plans to scrap the decades-old embargo. He and President Barack Obama "think that Cuban people should determine their own fate and they should

be able to live in freedom," Biden said after taking part in the Progressive Governance Summit. The vice president said a "transition" is needed in the Washington policy toward the communist-ruled island, but that he was in Chile "to talk about the economy, not Cuba."

Bill Clinton to LatAm bankers: engage the left

MEDELLIN, Colombia (AP)—Former U.S. President Bill Clinton urged the people who run Latin America's biggest development bank on Saturday not to turn their backs on the leftists in

the region who parlayed the poor's discontent into electoral victories. Clinton didn't name Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia, whose presidents have all demonized Washington and expelled U.S. diplomats in recent months, referring to them rather as "Colombia's neighbors." He said he doesn't agree with their politics but "I do understand why poor people who feel powerless turn away from the messy world of democracy." "It shouldn't be surprising that a reaction to global inequality and America's withdrawal in the last 8 years" under the Bush administration produced govern-

ments "that are either too authoritarian or too hostile to market economics or both," Clinton told Inter-American Development Bank's governors.

CAW, Chrysler still negotiating on pay gap issues

DETROIT (AP)—Although the Canadian Auto Workers union is still negotiating with Chrysler LLC to meet a looming March 31 deadline, a major sticking point remains on the table, according to the union's president. In an interview with The Associated Press,

CAW National President Ken Lewenza, said that "high-level meetings" and phone discussions are going on this weekend, as both sides negotiate modifications to a current contract. Auburn Hills, Mich.-based Chrysler needs to cut labor costs in Canada, as the company seeks aid from the government there. The company must reach a deal by Tuesday to qualify for a \$2.3 billion loan it requested last year. Chrysler Chief Bargainer Al Iacobelli said in a statement that the company is trying to close a pay gap of 19 Canadian dollars (\$15.36) per hour, to bring its costs in line with other automakers in Canada.

Nation

Fargo gets good news with new flood forecast

FARGO, N.D. (AP)—Fargo's fears of a catastrophic flood eased Saturday with word that the Red River apparently crested at lower-than-expected levels, and weary residents turned their attention to ensuring their hastily built levees hold up against an onslaught of ice-laden water expected to stay high for at least a week.

National Weather Service meteorol-

ogist Mike Hudson said the Red River began receding Saturday morning, surprising residents who were bracing for a crest on Sunday. But the river can still fluctuate up to a foot and may remain at dangerous levels for a week, meaning people will still have to wait several days before they are completely safe.

"The best news we can take from this is the river has crested," Fargo Mayor

Dennis Walaker said. "But diligence is going to have to be required for at least eight more days and hopefully things will continue to drop."

Forecasters say the river is retreating because cold temperatures have been freezing water that normally would be flowing into the river. By the time that water thaws, the biggest flooding threat should have passed, Hudson said.

The weather service said the river

crested around midnight at 40.82 feet. As of 5:15 p.m., it had dropped to 40.53, a significant shift from earlier forecasts that predicted the river would crest as high as 43 feet—the same level as the dikes protecting Fargo.

Despite the revised forecast, officials did not back down in their efforts to fend off the floodwaters, deploying high-tech Predator drone aircraft, calling up more National

Guard troops and asking residents to form neighborhood dike patrols to look for any breaches in levees.

Walaker and other officials have made it clear that they welcomed the extra help from residents to monitor the sandbag dikes hastily assembled to protect his city of 92,000—while remaining confident that residents could make it out of town at the last minute if they had to.



AP

Flooded roads to homes just south of Fargo, N.D., are seen Saturday, March 28, 2009.

Critics call WTC tower name change unpatriotic

NEW YORK (AP)—Even without the name, the symbolism of the Freedom Tower as an American response to the Sept. 11 terror attacks was hard to miss.

The original architect designed a twisting form he wanted to imitate the Statue of Liberty, with a spire that rose to the deliberate height of 1,776 feet to recognize the year of American independence. Politicians called the tower proof of the country's triumph over terrorism.

Former Gov. George Pataki said visitors to the iconic skyscraper "will know our determination to overcome evil" in a 2003 speech that first gave the Freedom Tower its name.

The tower—still under construction with a projected completion date of 2013—no longer has the same architect, design or footprint on the 16-acre site. And this week, the owners of ground zero publicly parted ways with the Freedom Tower name, saying it would be more practical to market the tallest building in New York as the former north tower's name, One World Trade Center.

Critics called the name drop an unpatriotic shedding of symbolism by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Some newspaper editorials blasted the agency for years of missed deadlines and changing plans for the site.

"When you've broken your promises on everything else to do with redeveloping ground zero, it's no big deal to discard the name by which the public has come to know the iconic skyscraper at the heart of the plan," the New York Daily News wrote on Friday.

But others privately repeated fears that have plagued the building as negotiations with major corporations to take up space in the tower came and went: that the 102-story Freedom Tower's name could make it more susceptible to future attacks than a symbol of defiance against it.

"The fact is, more than 3 billion dollars of public money is invested in that building and, as a public agency, we have the responsibility to make sure it is completed and that we utilize the best strategy to make certain it is fully occupied," the agency said in a statement Friday.

Agency chairman Anthony Coscia was more critical in remarks Thursday, when the Port Authority announced its first corporate lease at the tower with a Chinese business center.

"As we market the building, we will ensure the building is presented in the best possible way," he said. One World Trade Center is "easiest for people to identify with, and frankly, we've gotten a very interested and warm reception to it."

ACROSS THE NATION

Obama Notre Dame invite stirs Catholic debate

In American Catholicism, it doesn't get much bigger than Notre Dame. So when the university known for its golden dome, "Touchdown Jesus" mural and rigorous academics invited President Barack Obama to speak at its commencement and receive an honorary degree in May, it stoked both pride and anger on campus and nationwide. By giving a platform to a politician whose record on abortion and stem cell research clashes with core church teachings about human life, the private Catholic school on the plains of northern Indiana renewed an impassioned debate about what it means to be Catholic. The Notre Dame administration knew it was entering a political minefield. But the intensity of the reaction in the week since Obama accepted demonstrates the depths to which Catholics are divided about how Catholic individuals and institutions should engage

politics in a pluralistic society.

Southeast storm floods parts of Miss., Ala.

BILOXI, Miss. (AP)—A spring storm dumped heavy rains, baseball-sized hail and whipped up winds across the Southeast on Saturday, flooding homes and cars in parts of Mississippi and Alabama. The system also hit the central part of the country with snow, prompting blizzard warnings and a disaster declaration in Kansas and was blamed for two traffic deaths in Oklahoma. About 100 roads in southern Mississippi were impassable at the height of the bad weather because of the flooding, including the main route into Biloxi, Harrison County Emergency Management Director Rupert Lacy said. Some residents had to be rescued from their stalled and stranded cars, and others were helped from flooded homes, Lacy said. More than 200 homes in the Biloxi area sustained flood damage and two roads sustained major pavement washouts, Lacy said.

Ash falls on Anchorage as volcano keeps spewing

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—Alaska's Mount Redoubt continued to erupt Saturday, sending plumes of ash tens of thousands of feet into the air that rained down on at least one Alaska town.

Also, for the first time, the volcano spewed a thin layer of ash on Anchorage—enough to force the shutdown of the state's largest airport.

The volcano got started early Saturday by sending an ash plume 50,000 feet into the air.

A second eruption occurred shortly after 2 p.m. and sent ash 25,000 feet. Another occurred about an hour and a half later and sent ash 35,000 feet into the air.

Some of it came down on Nikiski,

a community across Cook Inlet about 50 miles from the volcano. A thinner layer fell on Anchorage, Alaska's largest city about 100 miles northeast of the volcano.

"The volcano is very mad at us for something. It is kind of grouchy," said Chris Waythomas, a geologist at the Alaska Volcano Observatory in Anchorage.

Linda Superman, owner of the Hunger Hut Bar in Nikiski, said the town received about one-eighth of an inch of ash. She said she was taking buckets of hot water and throwing them on the windshields of customers' cars so that the ash wouldn't scratch the glass when

they turned their wipers on.

"It is all over," she said. "You can actually see the ash blowing through the air."

After the first eruption, the observatory detected strong seismic activity lasting 20 minutes or more followed by an hours-long low-level tremor.

Alaska Airlines, the state's largest carrier, canceled all flights in and out of Anchorage on Saturday afternoon after Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport shut down because of the ash.

Since the volcano began erupting last Sunday, Alaska Airlines has canceled about 185 flights. Ash can cause engines to stall.

Shuttle Discovery lands in Fla. after 13-day trip

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—Shuttle Discovery and its crew of seven returned to Earth on Saturday and successfully wrapped up a construction mission that left the international space station with all its solar wings and extra electrical power.

Discovery swooped through a cloudy sky and landed at NASA's spaceport in midafternoon, a little later than initially planned.

"Welcome home, Discovery, after a great mission," Mission Control radioed.

"It's good to be back home," said Discovery's commander, Lee Archambault.

Mission Control delayed Discovery's homecoming by about 90 minutes, or one orbit, because of windy, cloudy weather. But the wind shifted

and conditions improved enough for the second and final landing opportunity of the day.

Discovery's 13-day flight—which ended just as a new Russian-launched crew was settling into the space station—was highlighted by the installation and unfurling of the space station's last pair of solar wings. The \$300 million addition brought the orbiting outpost up to full power, a vital part of NASA's plan to double the space station population and boost the amount of science research in a few months.

"This is really an amazing time," said NASA's space operations chief, Bill Gerstenmaier.

Late Saturday, the astronauts were still a little awestruck at having shaped the nearly completed space station, and

already missed being up there.

"This whole living in one-G thing is for the birds," said pilot Dominic "Tony" Antonelli, referring to Earth's gravity. "The zero-G, I think, is the way to go. It's a blast."

Discovery came back in good shape, after traveling more than 5 million miles and circling Earth 202 times. Even the area of the belly where a heat shield test was conducted during re-entry looked to be fairly clean, officials said.

A new type of tile with a slight bump was attached beneath Discovery's left wing to disrupt the hypersonic air flow. Infrared images were taken by a Navy plane as the shuttle crossed the Gulf of Mexico and headed toward Florida, so engineers could measure the extra heat generated on downstream tiles.

Asia

Scores still missing after dam in Indonesia bursts

CIRENDEU, Indonesia (AP)—Attention shifted to caring for homeless and hungry survivors after a dam burst outside the Indonesian capital, sending a wall of water crashing into homes and killing at least 91 people. More than 100 others are still missing, but hope dimmed Sunday of finding them alive.

Hundreds of soldiers, police and volunteers have been digging through the mud and debris, some using hoes or their bare hands, while other rescuers scoured the banks of bloated rivers.

But so far, they have turned up mostly bodies.

Days of heavy rain caused a large lake bordering a low-lying residential area southwest of Jakarta to overflow early Friday, sending water cascading over the rim with a thunderous rumble. Hours later, a huge section of the earth wall gave away, and a 10-foot (three-meter) -high wave gushed through Cirende, overturning cars and uprooting trees.

National Disaster Coordinating Agency spokesman Priyadi Kardono acknowledged that prospects of finding any-



Indonesian soldier search for victims a day after a dam burst in Jakarta, Indonesia, Saturday, March 28, 2009.

one alive in the muck were dimming by the hour, "though there's always the possibility that someone is alive trapped under the rubble."

Search-and-rescue operations would continue for at least a week, he said.

Some attention, meanwhile, shifted to providing food and shelter to the more than 1,600 people left homeless. Many were camping out in the hall of a nearby university, others in hastily erected tent camps.

Kardono said there was no shortage of supplies—instant noodles, baby food and bottled water—but with so many resources devoted to recovery efforts, the immediate problem was in distribution.

"What we urgently need are mattresses, blankets, clothes," said Abdul Hamid, one of the victims. "I don't have anything anymore, all I had was swept away by the water. I don't have clothes for my children and my grandchildren."

Some visit Pol Pot's grave looking for luck

ANLONG VENG, Cambodia (AP)—He was one of the greatest mass killers of the 20th century, but that doesn't stop the hopeful from praying at Pol Pot's hillside grave for lucky lottery numbers, job promotions and beautiful brides.

Nor does it stop tourists from picking clean the bones and ashes from the Khmer Rouge leader's burial ground in this

remote town in northwestern Cambodia.

The grave is among a slew of Khmer Rouge landmarks in Anlong Veng, where the movement's guerrillas made their last stand in 1998 just as Pol Pot lay dying. A \$1 million tourism master plan is being finalized to preserve and protect 15 of the sites, and charge admission.

Included on the tour will be the

houses and hideouts of the Khmer Rouge leaders, an execution site and places associated with Ta Mok, a brutal commander and Anlong Veng's last boss.

"People want to see the last stronghold of the Khmer Rouge and places where they committed atrocities," says Seang Sokheng, who heads the district tourism office and himself an ex-Khmer Rouge soldier.

Four other soldiers were wounded in the blast. No other casualties were reported. The statement late Saturday said six people have been detained in connection with the attack. The incident occurred as Afghanistan praised a new U.S. strategy for dealing with growing violence in the country, which includes increasing the number of Afghan forces.

Thai protesters promise not to seize airports

BANGKOK (AP)—Anti-government demonstrators in Thailand said Saturday they will not take over Bangkok's airports—as protesters did last year—but they will exert mounting pressure until the prime minister steps down. Several thousand protesters surrounded the office of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva for a third day, though the numbers had dwindled from a high of about 30,000 on Thursday. "We will stay indefinitely," said a protest leader, Nattawut Sai-kua, adding that protests will also branch out to other locations that he declined to name. "Our strategy is to keep applying pressure. The strategy will be adapted daily." The demonstrators are supporters of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted by a military coup in 2006 for alleged corruption and abuse of power.

ASIAN BRIEFS

China marks 50 years of direct control over Tibet

WUXI, China (AP)—China celebrated 50 years of direct control over Tibet with a lavish international Buddhist conference Saturday featuring a rare appearance by Beijing's hand-picked Buddhist leader—underscoring efforts to promote its image as a protector of the faith. March 28 marks the date when China ended the 1959 Tibetan uprising, sending Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama over the Himalayas into exile in India and placing Tibet under its direct rule for the first time. In China's official version of events, Tibet in mid-century was a remote medieval backwater where most people lived in servitude to the Buddhist theocracy and nobility until the Communist government stepped in. To support that contention, China commemorated a new political holiday Saturday—"Serfs Liberation Day."

US military: Roadside bomb kills 3 Afghan soldiers

KABUL (AP)—The U.S. military says three Afghan army commandos have been killed by a roadside bomb in eastern Afghanistan. The U.S. statement says the soldiers' vehicle struck the bomb Saturday while on patrol in Paktia province's Gardez district.

World

Spanish court considers trying former US officials

MADRID (AP)—A Spanish court has agreed to consider opening a criminal case against six former Bush administration officials, including former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, over allegations they gave legal cover for torture at Guantanamo Bay, a lawyer in the case said Saturday.

Human rights lawyers brought the case before leading anti-terror judge Baltasar Garzon, who agreed to send it on to prosecutors to decide

whether it had merit, Gonzalo Boye, one of the lawyers who brought the charges, told The Associated Press.

The ex-Bush officials are Gonzales; former undersecretary of defense for policy Douglas Feith; former Vice President Dick Cheney's chief of staff David Addington; Justice Department officials John Yoo and Jay S. Bybee; and Pentagon lawyer William Haynes.

"The charges as related to

me make no sense," Feith said Saturday. "They criticize me for promoting a controversial position that I never advocated."

Yoo declined to comment. A message left at the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco where Bybee is now a judge was not immediately returned. A message left at Chevron Corp. in San Ramon, Calif., where Haynes reportedly works as an attorney was not immediately returned.

Gunfight erupts as Iraqi Sunni leader arrested

BAGHDAD (AP)—Authorities arrested the local leader of a Sunni group that had broken with al-Qaida, sparking a gunfight Saturday in central Baghdad that killed four people and wounded 10, Iraqi officials said.

Adil al-Mashhadani, the head of an Awakening Council group, was detained Saturday along with an aide after a warrant was issued for his arrest, Iraqi military

spokesman Maj. Gen. Qasim al-Moussawi said.

The shooting started after Iraqi army and police units served the warrant in Fadhil, a Sunni enclave on the east bank of the Tigris River that was run by al-Qaida until U.S. and Iraqi soldiers regained control in 2007.

Four people—three civilians and a policeman were killed—and 10 people were wounded in the shooting, according to

police and hospital officials. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not supposed to release information to media.

How the Shiite-led government deals with the Sunni security volunteers, known variously as Awakening Councils or Sons of Iraq, is widely seen as a test of its ability to win the loyalty of disaffected Sunnis—an essential step in forging a lasting peace in Iraq.

Israel successfully tests anti-rocket system

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel has successfully tested a high-tech system designed to protect civilians from rocket attacks by militant groups in Gaza and south Lebanon, the Defense Ministry said.

Defense officials said Friday in the wake of the test that the Iron Dome system's development is on schedule and will likely meet its target date of 2010, when it is due to begin shooting down incoming rockets fired by Gaza militants.

A ministry statement released Thursday evening said that in a series of tests this week the system faced rockets

of the type fired by Palestinian and Lebanese militants, and "operated successfully regarding the targets of the test."

The statement termed the tests a "milestone." It did not say specifically what the tests entailed and stopped short of saying the Iron Dome had actually shot rockets down with an interceptor missile, which it is designed to eventually do.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with defense ministry regulations, said there has yet to be an intercept by the system.

They have said in the past that the first intercept is ex-

pected at the end of 2009.

Developed at a cost of over \$200 million, the system is intended to eventually fire missiles that home in on incoming short and medium-range rockets of the type used by militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah.

Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups have launched thousands of rockets into Israel from Gaza since 2001, sparking numerous Israeli military incursions, most recently the devastating three-week Gaza war that ended Jan. 18. Rocket fire has continued since the war, though it has dropped off in recent weeks.

WORLD BRIEFS

Researchers: Cyber spies break into govt computers

TORONTO (AP)—A cyber spy network based mainly in China hacked into classified documents from government and private organizations in 103 countries, including the computers of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan exiles, Canadian researchers said Saturday. The work of the Information Warfare Monitor initially focused on allegations of Chinese cyber espionage against the Tibetan community in exile, and eventually led to a much wider network of compromised machines, the Internet-based research group said. "We uncovered real-time evidence of malware that had penetrated Tibetan computer systems, extracting sensitive documents from the private office of the Dalai Lama," investigator Greg Walton said. The research group said that while it's analysis points to China as the main source of the network, it has not conclusively been able to detect the identity or motivation of the hackers.

Madagascar: Police break up demonstration

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar (AP)—Police in Madagascar's capital broke up an opposition demonstration by shooting into the air and using tear gas Saturday, Hospital officials said 34 people were injured. The demonstrators, supporters of Madagascar's ousted President Marc Ravalomanana, had tried to converge on a central square where the president's rival had held demonstrations in recent months. Andry Rajoelina had led a campaign of street protests that, with backing from the military, brought Ravalomanana down earlier this month. Rajoelina had accused Ravalomanana of doing too little to help the country's poor majority. Ravalomanana supporters had hoped to hear him address them by telephone Saturday from Swaziland, where he has been consulting with leaders before a regional summit on Madagascar set for Monday.

Health & Fitness

Jail uses acupuncture to help inmates beat addiction

By **KELLY BREWINGTON**
(C) 2009, THE BALTIMORE SUN

BALTIMORE—Beyond the iron gate, the fence and the razor wire, 10 inmates in maroon uniforms sit in stillness, listening to the serene sounds of sitar music. Eyes closed, hands folded, they await the tiny pricks of acupuncture needles inserted delicately into their ears.

Ancient Chinese medicine came to Baltimore's jail 16 years ago with the promise of curbing the cravings of drug addiction. Since then, acupuncture has been the centerpiece of a treatment program that serves nearly 700 inmates each year.

Modern science has not found solid evidence that it works. Nonetheless, the inmates claim that with acupuncture, all they crave are the meditative



a treatment space opens up.

"If it's one day, it's bad," says Danny McCoy, the detention center's assistant warden. "Back inside the institution, they are encountering all the things and people that would defeat the purpose of all they have learned in the treatment process."

The lure of the street is even worse, says Brooks, who took part in the jail's acupuncture program a decade ago. He stayed clean for six years.

He had started selling drugs at age 12, the same year his mother moved in with her boyfriend and left him to largely fend for himself. At 17, he snorted heroin for the first time.

Acupuncturist Pat Nordell encourages inmate Keith Williams to relax before inserting five needles in each ear. Williams is a part of ACT-SAP (Addicts Change Together-Substance Abuse Program) at the Baltimore City Detention Center.

THE BALTIMORE SUN



Inmates rest during their acupuncture treatments, in which five needles are inserted in each ear.

moments it brings. They say it soothes them and helps clear their cluttered minds to find the strength to confront their addiction.

"I've done buprenorphine and methadone, but neither one of them could compare to those needles," says Derrick Brooks, 42, who's battled heroin addiction his entire adult life. "Those needles put you in touch with stuff that's within you that no pill or nothing else could do."

District Judge Jamey H. Hueston thinks every addict should try it. "I am a huge fan of acupuncture," says Hueston, who presides over the city's drug court. "I have sent people in there kicking and screaming, resentful and scowling at me. And later they say, 'Judge, thank you.'"

Acupuncture is the key element of the Addicts Changing Together Substance Abuse Program administered by the drug court. Beginning for women in 1993 and for men three years later, the program steers nonviolent offenders to a rigorous 45-day behind-bars regimen in lieu of a longer prison term.

In addition to 25 acupuncture sessions, inmates receive group and individual counseling, GED training and life-skills classes. Recently, the program added a family mediation option for addicts who long ago burned family bridges but want to mend them.

Participants reside in a separate dorm at the Baltimore City Detention Center, away from the general population, and are encouraged to rely on one another for support.

The theory behind the acupuncture treatment is that it releases naturally occurring chemicals in the body that ease the symptoms of drug withdrawal and help users fight their addiction.

An acupuncturist places superfine stainless-steel needles in five points in the outer ear, each one designed to evoke a particular feeling, from calming the spirit to acceptance to reminding a person of his willpower. The recipient then sits quietly for 30 to 40 minutes. Lights are dimmed, and soft music plays to promote meditation.

Eastern medicine experts say what is at work is not just New Age wishful thinking.

The treatment causes the body to release feel-good chemicals called endorphins, which go to the same receptors in the brain that are turned on when someone takes drugs, says Dr. Lixing Lao, director of the traditional Chinese medicine program at the University of Maryland's Center for Integrative Medicine.

The technique works to treat pain in the same way, says Lao, who works closely with Maryland Shock Trauma Center, treating patients who have been critically injured.

"The concept is very obvious," he says. "If acupuncture works for pain, it should work for heroin addiction."

In the 1970s, doctors in a New York hospital began trying the ancient technique to treat heroin addiction. Since then, acupuncture centers have popped up around the world.

At a cost of \$40,000 a year for all 688

inmates, the acupuncture portion of the city jail program is cheap by most treatment standards. But its supporters stress that it must be used with counseling and other services to be effective.

The state Division of Correction does not track inmates after they complete the program and does not keep data on whether addicts stay clean. But Mohammad Riaz Ahmad, the program's director, points to studies that suggest acupuncture's effectiveness. A Yale University study found that 55 percent of participants tested free of cocaine during the last week of acupuncture treatment, compared with 24 percent and 9 percent in two groups that did not have acupuncture. But a follow-up study contradicted the earlier findings, and researchers said the topic needed more research.

A 2001 study of an acupuncture program at Baltimore's Penn North Neighborhood Center found that nearly one-third of patients stayed in the program for at least 30 sessions, or about three months, and that their rate of being arrested and charged decreased.

"We are not saying it's curing addiction—there is no cure for addiction," says Dave Wurzel, a certified acupuncturist whose firm does the jail's treatments. "Just like there is no cure for heart disease or diabetes. All we are doing in addiction treatment is lowering the risk factor that this person will die today of his or her addiction."

Officials with the jail program say the big problem comes when it's time for participants to be released.

About 80 percent of inmates who complete the program need the structured support of a residential treatment facility for as long as a year afterward, officials say. But demand for such treatment is so great that the facilities don't bother to keep a waiting list, says Gregory C. Warren, who heads Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, the quasi-governmental agency that oversees drug treatment in the city.

Graduates of the acupuncture program often are referred to outpatient programs instead of residential centers. If those slots are full, the inmates sometimes must be held in the general prison population for up to several weeks until

7 steps to help kids slim down

By **JEANNINE STEIN**
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Childhood obesity is a thorny issue without simple solutions, but that hasn't daunted health-care experts who work diligently to come up with viable proposals to help kids lose weight and get in shape.

The most recent strategy is the "Seven Steps to Success: A Handout for Parents of Overweight Children and Adolescents," designed by physicians and weight-loss experts to be worked in progressive stages: medical management, education, environmental changes, support groups, two forms of cognitive behavior therapy (clinic or short-term, and long-term) and bariatric surgery.

The steps, published in the February issue of the journal *Obesity Management*, are a reaction to a detailed article published in the journal *Pediatrics* in 2007. That article also outlined a multipronged approach to obesity, including prevention, structured weight management that includes medical screenings, physical activity and diet; a multidisciplinary intervention with food monitoring and structured exercise; and very-low-calorie diets and bariatric surgery (this updated a less comprehensive plan published in that journal in 1998).

But not everyone in the field of childhood obesity was satisfied with the suggestions outlined in the *Pediatrics* paper—some objected to the education-oriented proposals. "An educational approach is very popular in the United States, but it's very ineffective," said Daniel Kirschenbaum, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago and co-author of the *Obesity Management* article. Providing information about eating more fruits and vegetables may be well-meaning, he added, but it's not useful for prompting sustainable changes.

The seven steps ratchet up in intensity, requiring more effort and

commitment to achieve results. "Try one intervention," he said, "and if in a month you're not making progress, try another one. Science has taught us that you can tell pretty quickly if something isn't working."

The plan presumes that the entire family is involved with the process—previous studies have shown that better results come from a collaborative effort, not from telling one kid he has to eat chicken breasts and broccoli while the rest of the family gobbles pizza. As children segue into adolescence, he added, they can do more on their own. For behavioral therapy, the plan suggests starting with groups such as Weight Watchers or Take Off Pounds Sensibly that offer support, education and accountability and allow parents and children to work together. "These are very low-cost alternatives where people can come in every week," he said, "but they have to be willing to work." If those don't provide suitable results, parents can opt for more intense group sessions run by trained weight-loss professionals.

Bariatric surgery, Kirschenbaum said, may be a viable option for certain kids and teens, although it's not a decision to enter into lightly. Most clinics require patients to meet parameters such as being quite overweight and providing proof they've tried other weight-loss methods. Support—before and after surgery—and behavior modification are also essential components.

How should parents approach the list? Kirschenbaum says they shouldn't go it alone because navigating the steps may prove intimidating and frustrating. "They should take it to their primary-care physicians and get some help in making sense of it," he said. It works in reverse, too—health-care professionals can show it to their patients to begin a discussion about weight loss. "You should talk about it, see what you think. If you don't set a target for something, you're not going to reach it."

Life & Style

CNN in third place in prime time for first time

NEW YORK (AP)—CNN is poised to finish March third in the prime-time weeknight ratings behind Fox News Channel and MSNBC, the first time this has ever happened for the channel that pioneered the cable news genre nearly three decades ago.

CNN says its overall business is healthy and it is not straying from its straight news path. But it is suffering more audience erosion than its rivals since the peak days of the presidential election, further proof that the opinionated prime-time shows on Fox and MSNBC have greater audience loyalty.

CNN's weekday prime-time ratings are relatively flat compared to last year during the primary campaign, up 1 percent from March 2008, according to Nielsen Media Research. Fox's ratings have jumped 30 percent and MSNBC, the new No. 2, is up 24 percent. The biggest growth in cable news is for CNN's partner, HLN, formerly Headline News, which is up 62 percent.

Fox remains on a mountain above its two closest competitors, with its prime-time audience in March more than that of MSNBC and CNN combined. "The O'Reilly Factor" has done particularly well, keeping more of its postelection audience than anything else on CNN and MSNBC.

Through Wednesday, Fox was averaging 2.73 million prime-time viewers in March. MSNBC had 1.16 million and CNN had 1.14 million. The March ratings period ends Friday, and it's doubtful CNN will be able to overcome MSNBC.

"The fact that one network may have eked out a slight edge in one small slice



In this undated image released by CNN, CNN anchor Campbell Brown is shown.

AP

of the overall business really doesn't say much of anything," Jon Klein, CNN U.S. president, said on Friday. "It's more clear than ever, given the way that our competitors have positioned themselves, that CNN has positioned itself as the real news network."

Relying on news, rather than opinion, leaves CNN more susceptible to higher ratings peaks during big stories and lower valleys in routine times. Yet

it's hard to consider the present—new president, economic turmoil and two wars—a slow news period.

CNN's ratings news "is very significant," said Frank Sesno, a former CNN Washington bureau chief and now a professor at George Washington University. "This is a big problem."

More significant is what CNN's ratings problems mean coupled with the daily drumbeat of layoffs in the

newspaper industry, he said. With people more interested in hearing things through an ideological prism as a form of entertainment, it diminishes the value of independent voices giving straight news.

"It's getting harder to do real journalism on television," Sesno said. "This is 'man the ideological barricades.'"

Fox is ready to start a new venture Monday, "The Fox Nation," which it

views as an online community that believes in "your right to express your views, your values, your voice." Fox representatives would not immediately return a call for comment.

The most problematic part of CNN's prime-time schedule is Campbell Brown's 8 p.m. show, up against O'Reilly and MSNBC's Keith Olbermann. Brown's audience is smaller than any prime-time show on the three networks, and beneath Nancy Grace's crime hour on Headline News.

Brown leaves for a six-to-eight week maternity leave following Friday's show, and will be replaced temporarily by Roland Martin. Klein said Brown's show isn't in any danger, noting that it took years for Olbermann and O'Reilly to build their audiences and Brown has been in her job for a year.

There's been no talk of moving Grace to CNN, he said. Having Grace's crime-oriented show on Headline News allows CNN to keep its focus on being a news network, he said.

MSNBC's Rachel Maddow is a close third to Larry King, and both are beaten handily by Sean Hannity's new Fox solo show. At the 10 p.m. hour, a rerun of the show Olbermann did two hours earlier has been doing surprisingly well against CNN's "Anderson Cooper 360," leading MSNBC to at least temporarily put on hold any development of a new live show then.

MSNBC chief executive Phil Griffin said the prime-time ratings are an affirmation of the network's decision to go liberal with Olbermann and Maddow. But he also said it pointed to problems at his rival.

Longtime NBC newsman Irving R. Levine dies at 86

MIAMI (AP)—Irving R. Levine, the bow-tied NBC newsman who explained the fine points of economics to millions of viewers for nearly a quarter century, has died. He was 86.

Levine died Friday of prostate cancer complications in Washington, D.C., announced his son, Daniel Rome Levine (pronounced luh-VEEN').

Known for his dry, measured delivery and trademark bow ties, Levine was a presence at NBC since 1950 when he began covering the Korean War until his retirement in 1995.

He had become the network's full-time economics correspondent in 1971 and in the last five years of his tenure also did weekly commentaries on CNBC. He also appeared on "Meet the Press" more than 100 times over the years.

After retiring from NBC, Levine joined Lynn University in Boca Raton, Fla., as dean of the college of international communication.

Born in Pawtucket, R.I., Levine began his career in 1940, writing obituaries for The Providence Journal. He also worked as a correspondent for the International News Service and The Times of London.

After joining NBC, he covered assignments from Korea, Moscow and Vietnam to Algeria, Poland and South Africa.

As NBC correspondent in the Soviet Union, he did a half-hour program



In this Oct. 29, 1995 file photo, veteran reporter Irving R. Levine smiles during taping of NBC's "Meet the Press" in Washington.

in 1955 giving a tourist's eye view of Moscow, showing Cold War-era Americans that the Communist capital had "an amusement park not unlike Coney Island (and) another park in which old men played chess and mothers relaxed with their children," The New York Times reported. He explored similar themes in his 1959 book, "Main Street, U.S.S.R."

In 1965, while in Rome, he interviewed the great film director Federico Fellini.

In a 1995 New York Times interview, he recalled that he had hoped to cover

the State Department after winding up his foreign correspondent days. But NBC bosses asked him early in 1971 to cover business news instead.

"It was a barren time," Levine said. "Producers just weren't interested in those stories." By the time he retired, though, business news on television was a booming field—though he noted in 1995 that something like the Oklahoma city bombing or the O.J. Simpson trial could still push it aside.

At a welcoming ceremony at the Boca Raton school later that year, Levine said he didn't miss the daily grind but still read three or four newspapers every day, quipping, "Once a news junkie, always a news junkie." He retired from the school in 2004 but continued to be a prominent fixture on campus, a statement from the university said.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy, and their three children, Jeffrey, Daniel and Jennifer.

In a humorous 2001 essay in The New York Times, Levine welcomed the return of the middle initial as epitomized by then-new President George W. Bush.

He recalled that producers trying to shorten a television news story of his "finally suggested I drop the R in my sign-off, Irving R. Levine. I held my ground."

"No," I said, "I'd rather drop the B in NBC."

IRS: Castroneves owes \$2.3 million in taxes

MIAMI (AP)—Brazilian race car driver and "Dancing With The Stars" winner Helio Castroneves owes more than \$2.3 million in U.S. taxes because of unreported income and improper deductions over a five-year period, an Internal Revenue Service agent testified Friday at his tax evasion trial.

The total, IRS agent Joann Levitt said, "is everything that should have been on the tax returns but wasn't."

Castroneves attorney David Garvin questioned whether Levitt had considered an alternative legal explanation for entries on the tax returns from 1999 to 2004.

"You made certain assumptions but you disregarded other evidence, isn't that right?" Garvin asked.

"I have rendered an opinion based on all of the evidence," Levitt said. "This was reportable by Helio Castroneves because it was his income."

The testimony by Levitt, the final prosecution witness, capped the fourth week of the trial. Castroneves, 33, his 35-year-old sister and business manager Katiucia, and Michigan lawyer Alan Miller, 71, each face more than six years in prison if convicted of conspiracy and tax evasion involving about \$5.5 million in income.

Defense lawyers are expected to begin their case early next week but have not said whether Castroneves will testify. The two-time Indianapolis

500 winner has previously said he paid little attention to his financial affairs and relied on professionals to handle them.

In her testimony Friday, Levitt painstakingly went over the details of Castroneves' alleged tax evasion, which centers on a Panamanian entity called Seven Promotions that the IRS claims was secretly owned by the driver.

If it was, then U.S. taxes should have been paid on about \$5 million in licensing payments for Castroneves from Penske Racing beginning in 2000. If it wasn't owned by Castroneves, he might have owed no tax, Levitt acknowledged.

"Helio Castroneves was the ultimate beneficiary of the accounts of Seven," she said.

Levitt said Castroneves also improperly claimed thousands of dollars in business deductions and failed to declare as income Hugo Boss clothing and airline tickets he received.

Ultimately, the Penske Racing payments were never made to Seven Promotions but were eventually deposited in a deferred income deal with a Dutch company. Yet under IRS rules, Levitt said Castroneves was liable for the tax even though he never actually received the money.

IN LOVING MEMORY

*Rosalyn Connie Alepuyo
Sanchez Mafnas*

Lovingly known as
Nene'

Was born on February 9, 1989 and
Called to her eternal rest by our Heavenly Father on March 21, 2009
at Fort Campbell, Kentucky

In her passing, she now joins her:

Maternal Grand Parents: Juan Sumabol Alepuyo & Rosario Camacho Alepuyo
Paternal Grandparents: Juan Aguon Sanchez & Concepcion Deleon Guerrero Sanchez
Aunts & Uncles: Dolores Sablan Alasas, Leon S. Pinaula, Isabel Sablan Taitano,
Maximino Kotomor Taitano, Antonio Toves Quitugua
Cousins: Peter John Deleon Guerrero Alepuyo, Joseph Alepuyo Deleon Guerrero

Her memories will forever remain in the hearts of her family:

Husband: Tyrone Zoe Camacho Mafnas (Benjamin Joerone Sablan)

Parents: Martina Alepuyo & Eliezer "Ace" Uchel
Fernando Deleon Guerrero Sanchez

Grandparents: Haruo Uchel & Sadako Uchel

Siblings: Patrick Greg Alepuyo Sanchez & Luise Vaughn Villagomez
(Zoe Rae; Tihanna Merced; Patrick, Jr.)
Jaylene S. & Patrick Dela Cruz
(Kaylene Camacho Alepuyo, Leo Andre Ed)

Joscelyn Alepuyo Sanchez
Adrian John Alepuyo Uchel

Parents-in-Law: Jose Castro & Patricia Camacho Mafnas

Brothers & Sisters-in-Laws:

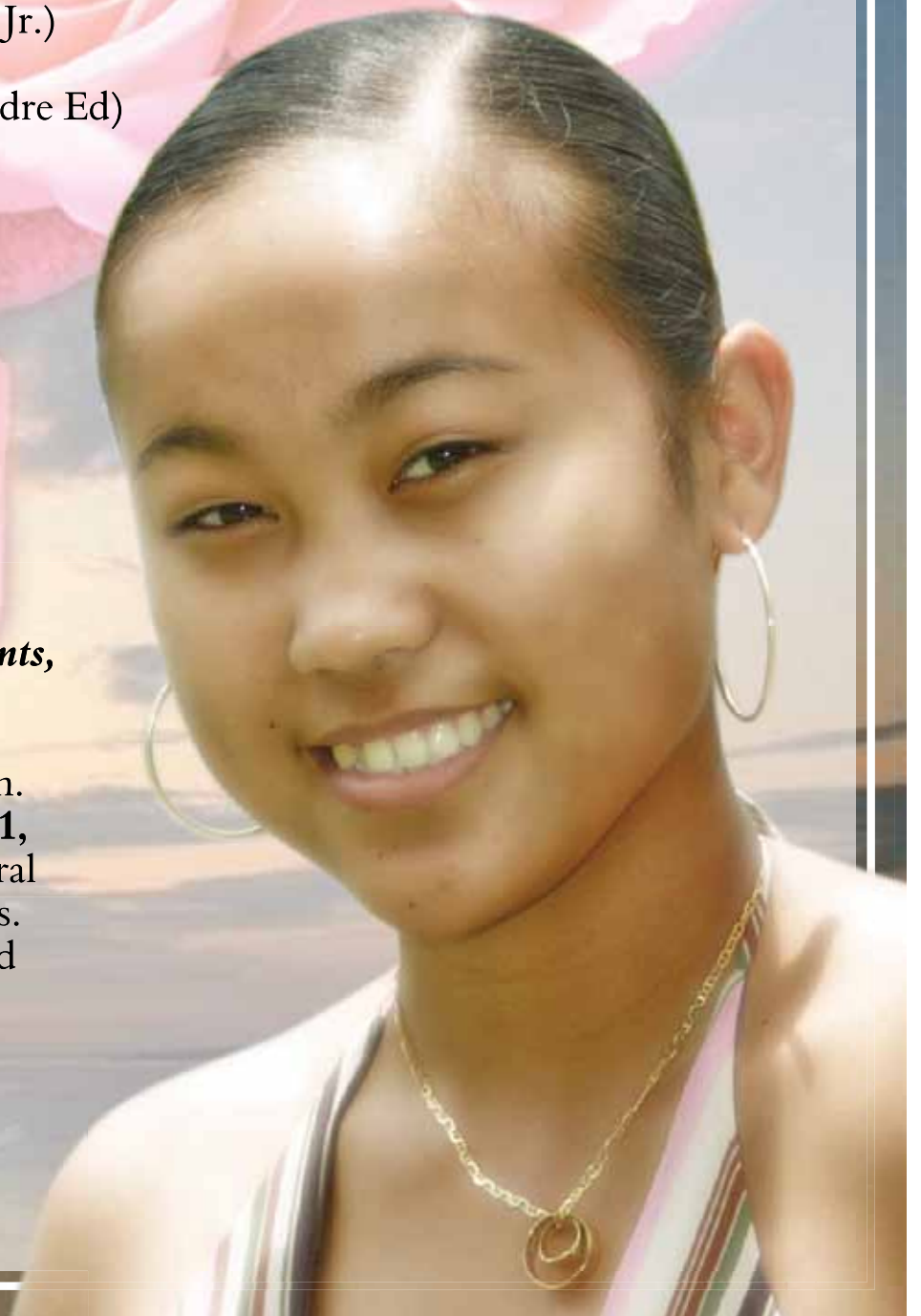
Daphne Blanche Camacho Mafnas/
Joaquin Torres (Keandre Joaquin)
Trumaine Leo-don Camacho Mafnas
Patty Jhoe Dayne Camacho Mafnas
Jonavaughn Cole Camacho Mafnas
Keiziah Jonae Camacho Mafnas

*She will also be forever loved and remembered by numerous aunts,
uncles and cousins, nieces and nephews*

Nightly mass is offered at the San Vicente church at 6:00 p.m.
and followed by the rosary at 7 p.m. On **Tuesday, March 31,
2009**, our beloved Nene' will be escorted from Borja's Funeral
Home at 9 a.m. to the Cathedral for viewing and last respects.
Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 3 p.m. followed
by the internment service at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers

From the Family



'High School Musical 3' wins at Kids Choice Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"High School Music 3: Senior Year" graduated with honors Saturday at the Kids Choice Awards.

The Disney musical was selected as the favorite movie by audience votes at the 22nd annual slime-filled Nickelodeon spectacle held inside UCLA's Pauley Pavilion. "High School Musical" star Vanessa Hudgens was also selected as the favorite movie actress.

"Lately, a lot of people have been taking credit for bringing back the musical," Zac Efron said while accepting the movie's trophy. "The truth is we've known who's been responsible for bringing back the musical all along. It was you guys!"

The show's hijinks kicked off with host and "Race to Witch Mountain" star Dwayne Johnson zip-lining over the audience of screaming teens and tweens into a "slime temple." Johnson proceeded to spray the first row with gooey green slime. Other shenanigans included squirting singer Jesse McCartney with a fake microphone and Will Farrell slipping and sliding down a hill.

Winners included "iCarly" for TV show, "American Idol" for reality show, Jonas Brothers for music group and "Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa" for animated movie. Jack Black arrived in motorcycle sidecar to pick up his award for favorite voice from an animated film for "Kung Fu Panda."

Miley Cyrus was brought to tears when she was announced as favorite female singer.

"I really thought I was gonna lose, so thank you, guys," said Cyrus.

Johnson said over 90 million viewer votes were cast at Nick's Web site. Instead of envelopes, blimp recipients were revealed from inside spy-like steel briefcases. Some held surprises throughout the show. Before presenters Sandra Bullock and Hugh Jackman

announced the "Twilight" series as favorite book, a briefcase doused the pair with green slime.

The green theme took on an entirely different meaning when Cameron Diaz presented her "Gangs of New York" co-star Leonardo DiCaprio with the first-ever Big Green Help Award. The "Titanic" and

"Revolutionary Road" actor was selected to receive the green blimp trophy because of his contribution and promotion of environmental issues.

"Right now, our mother—our mother—all of our mothers, Mother Earth is hurting," said DiCaprio. "And she needs a generation of thoughtful, caring and active kids like all of you to protect her for the future. You can help us win the battle to clean up our air, our water, our land, to protect our forests, our oceans and our wildlife."

Most of the blimp recipients were relegated to brief announcements before and after the commercials.

Among those winners were "Wizards of Waverly Place" star Selena Gomez for TV actress, "The Suite Life of Zack and Cody" star Dylan Sprouse for TV actor, "SpongeBob SquarePants" for cartoon, Jesse McCartney for male singer, Beyonce's "Single Ladies" for song, Will Smith for movie actor, "Guitar Hero World Tour" for video game, Candace Parker for female athlete and Peyton Manning for male athlete.

Earlier this year, controversy found its way into the show when pop star Chris Brown withdrew his name from Kids' Choice contention. The nominations were announced shortly before his arrest for allegedly attacking girlfriend and fellow Kids' Choice nominee Rihanna. Neither was in attendance Saturday, and Rihanna, twice nominated, lost in both categories.

The show concluded with Johnson and a troop of Polynesian dancers summoning the "slime temple" to spew the sticky stuff all over the audience. Instead, the Jonas Brothers emerged and sang a capella, causing slime to cascade over the boy band, Johnson, the dancers and much of the audience.



Zac Efron and Vanessa Hudgens arrive at the 22nd Annual Kids' Choice Awards on Saturday, March 28, 2009, in Los Angeles.

Kids' Choice Awards winners

Winners from the 22nd annual Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards:

- Favorite Movie: "High School Musical 3: Senior Year."
- Favorite Movie Actor: Will Smith, "Hancock."
- Favorite Movie Actress: Vanessa Hudgens, "High School Musical 3: Senior Year."
- Favorite Animated Movie: "Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa."
- Favorite Voice from an Animated Movie: Jack Black, "Kung Fu Panda."
- Favorite Song: Beyonce, "Single Ladies (Put a Ring On It)."
- Favorite Male Singer: Jesse McCartney.
- Favorite Female Singer: Miley Cyrus.
- Favorite Music Group: Jonas Brothers.
- Favorite TV Show: "iCarly."
- Favorite Reality Show: "American Idol."
- Favorite TV Actress: Selena Gomez, "Wizards of Waverly."
- Favorite TV Actor: Cole Sprouse, "The Suite Life of Zack and Cody."
- Favorite Cartoon: "SpongeBob SquarePants."
- Favorite Male Athlete: Peyton Manning.
- Favorite Female Athlete: Candace Parker.
- Favorite Video Game: "Guitar Hero World Tour."
- Favorite Book: "Twilight" series.

DEATH AND FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

In Loving Memory of

EDWARD REYES MENDIOLA

Born to Life on December 28, 1953

Eddie was called by his Creator on March 16, 2009

In his new life, he now joins his:

Father: Mariano Castro Mendiola (Kan/Damoa)

Sister: Margarita Reyes Mendiola

Brother: Miguel Santos

Niece: Janice Mendiola Reyes

Baptismal Godfather: Joaquin Guerrero

Confirmation Godfather: Gabriel Borja

Grand-Parents: Jesus M. Mendiola

Ana Castro Mendiola

Manuel DLG. Reyes

Dolores Flores Reyes

Temengil Bechab

Rorou Rdechor

He will be missed and his memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife: Mimi (Ivy) Almario Mendiola

Mother: Susana Flores Reyes-Mendiola

Baptismal Godmother: Isabel Pangelinan

Children: William, Naomi Puanani, Patrick John

Rear Daughter: Kanoelhua Pumehana Elua Zelda Awaa

Sibling & Spouse

Calistro R. / Patricia Mendiola & Children

Florentina M. / Juan Reyes & Children

Richard R. / Glenda Mendiola & Children

Francisco R. / Annie Mendiola & Children

Margarita M. / Antonio Reyes & Children

Father In-Law: Leonardo Almario, Sr.

Mother In-Law: Elizabeth Almario

Brothers / Sister In-Law & Spouse

Mary Ann Almario

Leonardo Almario Jr & Children

Marivic Almario Bartucci & Children

Chloe Almario & Children

Nielo Almario & Children

Special Auntie In-Law: Teresita Almario

Mary Grace Almario Nebarte & Children

Marites Amario

Ray John Almario

Chloe A. / Steve Karolzcuk & Family

He is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

Nightly Mass is being offered at 6:00 p.m. at San Antonio Church. On Wednesday, April 01, 2009 his remains will arrived from Honolulu at 12:30 a.m. and will be escorted to Borja Funeral Home Service. Our beloved Eddie will be escorted from Borja Funeral Home to San Antonio Church on Saturday, April 04, 2009 at 7:00 a.m. for viewing and last respect. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. followed by interment service at Chalan Kanoa Public Cemetery.

Your Thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated

Dangkulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

Ivy Mendiola, Children & Families

1st Year Death Anniversary of

TITO MANAHANE MUNA

April 11, 2008

Mass will be held at San Antonio Church from

March 31, 2009 – April 11, 2009 due to Holy Week services.

DATE	TIME
March 31-April3, 2009	6:00 p.m.
April 5	Palm Sunday 7:00 a.m.
Holy Week:	
April 6-7	Holy Monday & Tuesday 6:00 p.m.
April 8	Holy Wednesday None
April 9	Holy Thursday 6:30 p.m.
April 10	Good Friday None
April 11	Holy Saturday 7:00 p.m.

We are inviting our family and friends to join us for the 1st Death Anniversary of our beloved husband, father, grandfather, and uncle, Tito Manahane Muna. Thank you!

From: Erlinda Ellaga and Family

Heigl says she'll stay if 'Grey's' will have her

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Katherine Heigl said Friday she's ready to stay with "Grey's Anatomy" and the decision rests with the show.

Attending a studio party to mark the ABC medical drama's 100th episode, Heigl said it's premature to think her days as Dr. Izzie Stevens are numbered.

"I was assuming that at one point and I got a lot of shrugged shoulders and shakes of the head, so I don't know if that's a yes or a no. No one will tell me and I don't know how this is going to go," Heigl said, noting series creator Shonda Rhimes' passion for plot secrecy.

"I don't know if I live or die. I don't know how Izzie fares," said the actress, who's played the character since the show debuted in 2005.

"I'm there" if Izzie remains part of "Grey's Anatomy," Heigl said. She called the set "one of my favorite places to be" and said her colleagues are also friends.

She and fellow cast members, including Ellen Pompeo (Dr. Meredith Grey) and Patrick Dempsey (Dr. Derek Shepherd), were on hand for the celebration that included a cake decorated with scalpels and syringes made



In this May 31, 2008 file photo, actress Katherine Heigl arrives at the 7th Annual Chrysalis Butterfly Ball in Los Angeles.

AP

out of icing.

Rhimes, who's also an executive producer for the show, called the milestone a "huge accomplishment" and thanked the cast and crew for their efforts.

In an interview, she dropped a tantalizing clue about the episode airing May 7.

"The only thing I'll tell you about the 100th is that it takes place on Meredith and Derek's wedding day," Rhimes said. "That's big ... and that's all I'm going to say."

On Thursday's episode, Izzie was seen surviving brain surgery. There's been specula-

tion that Heigl wants to pursue her blossoming film career ("Knocked Up," the upcoming "The Ugly Truth") full-time, and that her character might be killed off.

Rhimes declined comment on what would happen to Heigl's character.

Rapper T.I. sentenced to year on weapons charges

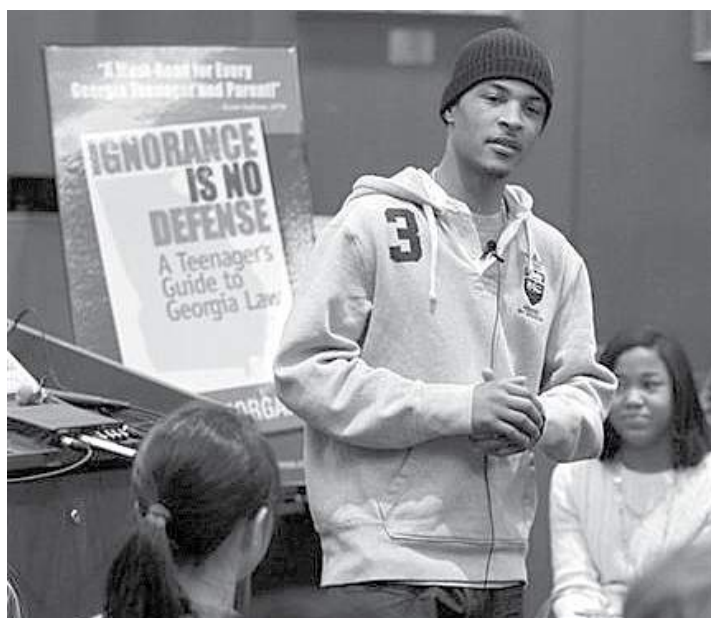
ATLANTA (AP)—Rapper T.I. was sentenced Friday to one year and a day in prison after pleading guilty to federal weapons charges after he tried to buy a stash of machine guns and silencers to protect himself after his best friend was killed.

The 28-year-old rapper, whose real name is Clifford Harris, will also pay a \$100,000 fine as part of his sentence. He was arrested in 2007 after trying to buy unregistered machine guns and silencers.

He pleaded guilty last March to the federal weapons charges but wasn't sentenced until Friday as part of a deal to see if he would be successful in performing community service by speaking to youths about the pitfalls of drugs, violence and guns.

"Today, I would like to say thank you to some, and apologize to all," the rapper told U.S. District Judge Charles Pannell Jr., who handed down the sentence.

Harris went to buy the cache after his best friend, Philant Johnson, was killed following a post-



Rapper T.I. whose real name is Clifford Harris Jr., speaks to Atlanta Friday, Feb. 20, 2009. T.I. was convicted a year ago on federal weapons charges.

performance party in Cincinnati in 2006. A man was found guilty last year in the murder case. Harris testified in that trial that he believed the bullets fired at his entourage were meant for him.

Harris ended up trying to buy

weapons from undercover federal agents in a deal that was brokered through his bodyguard. He was arrested blocks from where he was to have headlined the BET Hip-Hop Awards in Atlanta hours later.

Vanessa Redgrave reschedules Cathedral appearance

NEW YORK (AP)—Vanessa Redgrave has rescheduled her benefit performance of the stage version of "The Year of Magical Thinking" at New York's Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine.

Cathedral spokesman Jonathan Korzen says the performance will be held Oct. 26 as a benefit for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provide help for the children of Gaza and southern Israel.

It originally had been set for April 27.



In 2007, Redgrave starred on Broadway in Joan Didion's meditation on the deaths of her husband and daughter, and she later performed the one-woman show in London. Redgrave's eldest daughter, Natasha Richardson, died March 18 from injuries received in a skiing accident in Canada.

In this Nov. 13, 2008 file photo, Vanessa Redgrave arrives at the premiere of the film "Milk" at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills, Calif.

AP

Courtney Love's apparent online rants now in court

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Some of Courtney Love's online rants are now in a Los Angeles court.

A fashion designer's libel and breach of contract lawsuit against the singer includes what she calls several "menacing and disturbing" statements posted on the Internet.

Austin, Texas-based Dawn Simorangkir (Sim-or-AHNG-ker), also known as Boudoir Queen, says Love never paid her for work done. She filed the lawsuit Thursday in Los Angeles Superior Court.

The suit cites remarks from Love's Twitter and MySpace pages, and in the feedback section of Etsy.com. It said Love called Simorangkir a "nasty lying hosebag thief" and accused her of being a drug addict and a prostitute.

Phone messages left for Love's publicist Thursday and Friday were not immediately returned.



In this Feb. 9, 2009 file photo, Courtney Love arrives for the 2009 Elle Style Awards at Big Sky studios in north London.

Memorial donations to charity get lost in paperwork jungle

DEAR ABBY: Please allow me to share some hard-earned advice with your readers. The custom of making donations to a charity in honor of a loved one is common practice nowadays. Although I wholeheartedly support the idea, there can be "problems."

I have learned the hard way to always send a sympathy card to the family, indicating that I made the donation. A close friend's mother passed away, and I made a contribution to her favorite charity clearly indicating on the check "in memory of."

After six months of not receiving an acknowledgement, I politely asked my friend how many donations had been made in her mom's memory. Her answer was "none." When I explained to her that I had sent a donation and so had many other people, she phoned the charity. Their answer was, "Sorry, we forgot to mail out the list!"

On another occasion a relative informed me that my name wasn't on the list of donors. I told her to call the organization back because I had a canceled check. When she did, they informed her that the entire list hadn't printed out correctly.

LESSON LEARNED IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR LESSON LEARNED: Thank you for writing. I'm sure your letter will raise some eyebrows. Readers, if you follow this advice, it could prevent some misunderstandings and hurt feelings, so file this information in your memory banks.

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Rollie," and I have an issue regarding his ex-wife, "Flora." She lives seven hours from us in the same city as their grown children. Rollie sometimes goes without me to spend time with the boys. I don't have a problem with not being included on these trips because I know my husband misses his sons and wants to spend "guy time" with them.

My issue is Rollie is too cheap to pay for a hotel—although we do have the money—so he stays with Flora. I don't consider myself a prude, but I find this unacceptable.

Can you give me your view? Supposedly, at least one of the "boys" is staying there, too.

THE CURRENT MRS. IN JAMESTOWN, N.Y.

DEAR CURRENT MRS.: I can see both sides of this question. Rollie loves his money and you love Rollie, and his staying with his ex is a gut-level threat, whether real or imagined. Out of respect for your feelings, your husband should stay with one of his grown sons when he goes to visit. That way, he won't have to shell out any money, and you won't have to worry about appearances.

DEAR ABBY: I am 14, just got my first boyfriend, and I don't know how to tell my mom. I don't want to ask my friends because I don't want them to know that I haven't told my mom yet. She can be overprotective sometimes, and I'm afraid she will go crazy because her one and only daughter has her first boyfriend. I feel guilty because I don't want to lie and not tell her about him. Please help.

DESPERATE IN LONGVIEW, TEXAS

DEAR DESPERATE: Many people your age see each other in groups. If the young man isn't already a part of your group of friends, start including him. That way, your mother can meet and get to know him, and the concept that you might like each other won't be threatening to her. I agree that she must be told because you are at an age when a daughter should be able to tell her mother anything.

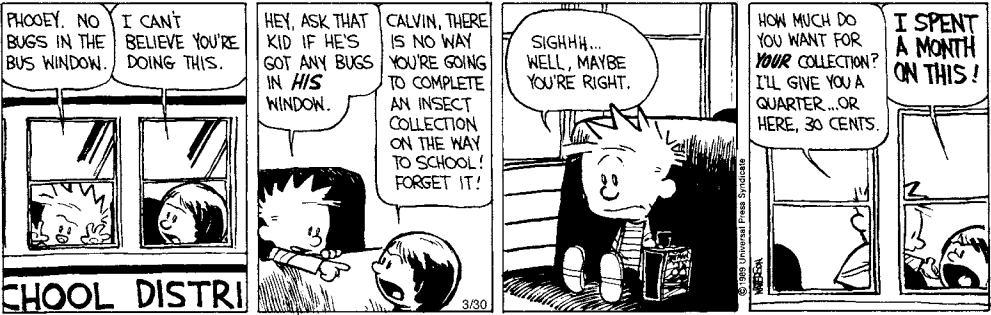
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby - Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

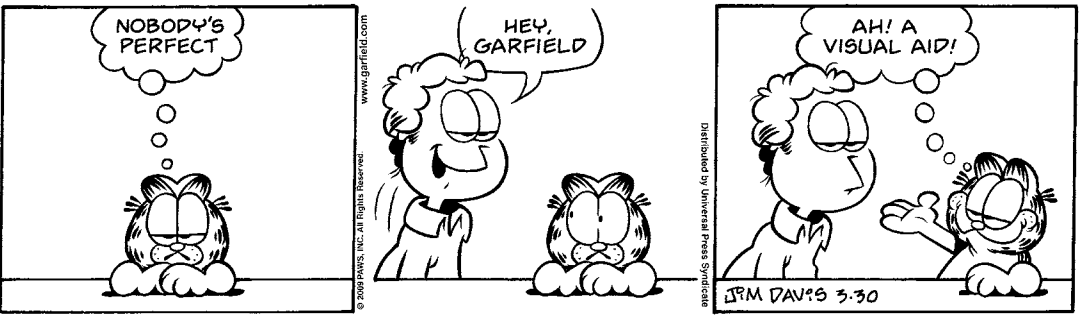
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



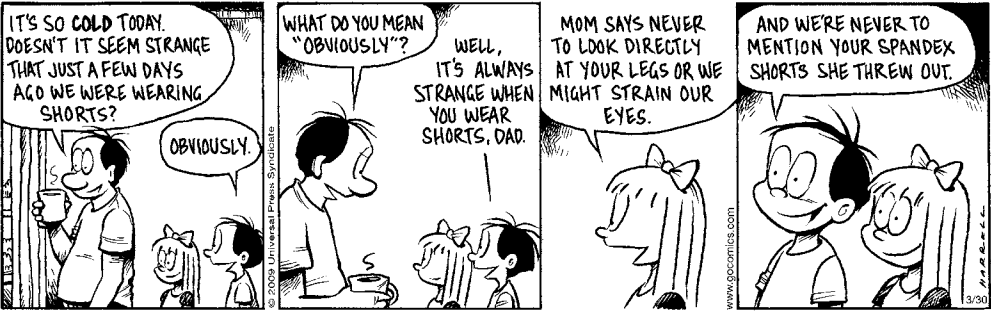
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



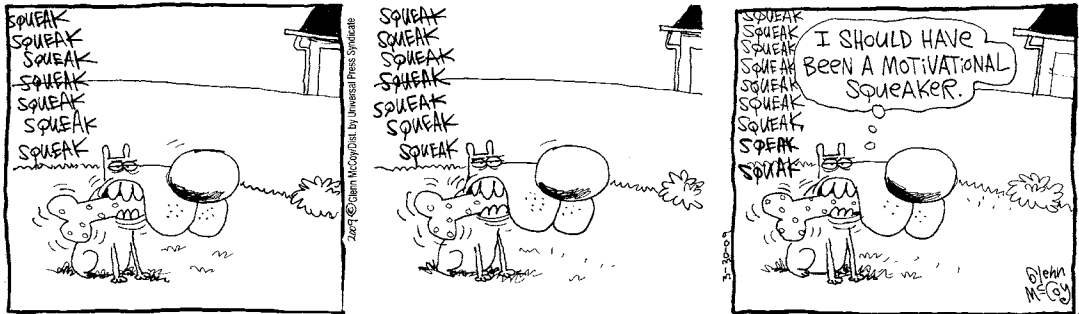
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

41 Motion detector, e.g.

4 Recede

7 Note to self, e.g.

11 Co-ed quarters

13 Stout cousin?

14 Verve

15 Concept

16 Dress (in)

17 Otherwise

18 Tropical timber trees

20 Coated with gold

22 Dawn goddess

24 Acceptable

28 Splendor

32 Form

33 PC picture

34 Morning moisture

36 Facility

37 Disreputable

39 It may say "Home Sweet Home"

DOWN

21 —

2 Tend texts

23 Norm (Abbr.)

25 False idol

26 Church section

27 Antelope's playmate

28 Fail to hit

29 Rue the run

30 Rivers or Collins

31 "Of course"

35 Ashen

38 Second person

40 Swab the deck

42 Batman's partner

45 Protuberance

47 Teensy bit

48 Get by somehow

49 Nobel chemist

50 Venomous snake

51 Bill and —

52 Wife's address

54 "Roscoe"

Solution time: 24 mins.

Broth Aghas

Seethe Nooses

Caftan Tartan

Ani Inall Esa

Ring Ale Grok

Feels Argonne

Aka See

Clerics Erect

Oily Har Sloe

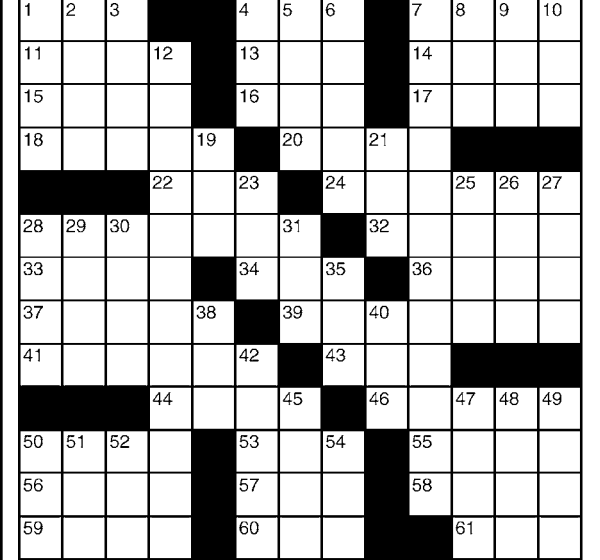
Pta Texas Abe

Amytan Bhutan

Lunate Basely

Sexes Idest

Saturday's answer 3-30



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Scott Moffatt, 26; Norah Jones, 30; Celine Dion, 41; Paul Reiser, 52

Happy Birthday: Speak your mind and be open to ideas, activities and events you've never experienced before. Changes to the way you do things or what you do will result in creativity that will enhance the way others see you. Don't be too eager to give away too much; your generosity will be your downfall. Reap the rewards for your hard work. Your numbers are 7, 9, 12, 23, 35, 44, 49

ARIES (March 21-April 19): When it comes to making money or formulating deals, you have to tell it like it is and let everyone know what you want and need to proceed. Positive results will come from taking proper control. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): It's your life and you must be willing to be responsible for the results. Deception is being used in emotional ways to convince you to make unhealthy decisions that will benefit others but not you. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You can play the game as well as anyone, so why are you letting your emotions get the better of you? Call someone's bluff and stop him or her from taking over. You can make the changes necessary for reforms and a better life. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Someone you love may be acting childish. Don't get involved in idle chatter or gossip that can only cause you problems in the future. Concentrate on getting ahead and doing things your way. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Look for a way to promote your plans. Your ability to communicate your ideas and incorporate what others are doing into your own goals will help you build a strong future. Love is in the stars, so combine business with pleasure. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A fast talker may try to convince you to spend on something you shouldn't. Don't get angry, just play it smart and say no. Put your time, effort and hard work into your home and family. **

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can form a good partnership that will enable you to reach your goals faster. Your creative ideas coupled with the drive your partner has will make you successful. Love is looking favorable and communication will bring results. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Change may be necessary but don't let it be costly. If someone wants too much, say no. Put your energy to work for you and develop what you need to help you produce the most and the best you can. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You have to look at your personal life and make the right adjustments to achieve happiness. If someone is playing games with you or bringing you down, address the situation instead of running away or ignoring what's going on. Show your true worth. ***

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will find it easy to get along with acquaintances but those you are close to will not

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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be as accommodating. Focus on expanding your circle of friends and you will recognize what true friendship means. It's time for change but only you can make it happen. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Emotional matters may escalate if you haven't got a good understanding of the facts involved. Travel and communication will fall short of your expectations. Sit tight until you have a better handle on your situation. **

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Jumping from one thing to another will unnerve the competition and keep you in the game. You have to be able to keep a secret. Someone may play you for a fool if you believe he or she is really truly on your side. ****

Birthday Baby: You are charming, engaging and know how to work a crowd. You are a master at getting things done and are gifted and forthright.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	5	7	8	2	3	9	4	1
1	8	2	9	6	4	3	7	5
3	9	4	7	5	1	8	6	2
9	4	8	2	3	5	6	1	7
2	1	3	6	7	9	5	8	4
7	6	5	4	1	8	2	3	9
4	7	9	5	8	6	1	2	3
8	2	1	3	9	7	4	5	6
5	3	6	1	4	2	7	9	8

Difficulty Level ★ 3/30

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WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

FITNESS ASSESSMENT Solution: 7 letters

T T Y T N A I C I S Y H P S Q

R R T E E S N O I T I R T U N

A E I E V G A G E S O N E P S

I P W C I R R F N F E S R P S

N X O O E D U A E M T O O L E

E E R S L P E S T I T R F E N

R R K D M L S N O E T O C M E

S U O E O I I N I S R I L E R

D G U E O O N N T M B N U N A

R I T N P A T R U O R D B T W

O F A P I H A L R N I E S S A

C L A R G E A E R A T X T T O

E V E I H C A D E N G I S E D

R H E A L T H I E R I S K S D

C H A R T S E N I T U O R T R

© 2009 Universal Press Syndicate www.wonderword.com 3/30

Achieve, Aerobic, Ages, Appointment, Area, Awareness, Charts, Clubs, Designed, Determined, Diet, Expert, Figure, Formula, Healthier, Heart, Height, Index, Lean, Lower, Needs, Nutrition, Physician, Professional, Protein, Questionnaire, Records, Risks, Routines, Safe, Sports, Supplements, Survey, Target, Test, Trainer, Triceps, Workout

Last Saturday's Answer: Comfort

To order THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 or 27, send \$5.95 each (US funds only payable to Universal Press Syndicate plus \$3 postage for the first book order, \$1 per book for each additional book. Send to WONDERWORD, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free, 1-800-642-6480. Order online at upuzzles.com.

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Saipan Tribune

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

Find today's solution in this section

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• 5-Liner	\$35
• 3-Liner with picture	\$45
• 5-Liner with picture	\$55

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Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- Saipan Tribune: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Reynolds, 'Nova nick Pitt in East Region



BOSTON (AP)—Scottie Reynolds made a half-court dash for the game-winning shot with 0.5 seconds left, leading Villanova over Pittsburgh 78-76 Saturday night and back to the Final Four for the first time since its shocking run to the 1985 championship.

Dwayne Anderson scored 17 points for the third-seeded Wildcats, who responded to Pittsburgh's physical play by sinking 22 of 23 free throws in the East Regional final.

Villanova (30-7) will play the winner of the South Regional championship between North Carolina and Oklahoma. The Wildcats are the lowest-remaining seed in the NCAA tournament, though not quite as big an underdog as the eighth-seeded '85 team that was the lowest seed ever to win it all.

Sam Young scored 28 and DeJuan Blair had 20 points and 10 rebounds for Pittsburgh (31-5), the first No. 1 seed to leave the brackets this year.

It was physical. It was defensive. It was ugly.

Just the way they like it in the Big East, which will send a second team to Detroit - with a chance at a third when Louisville plays Michigan State in the Midwest Regional final on Sunday.

With big bodies clogging the lane and 3-pointers clanging off the rim, the teams pushed and shoved their way through the first 35 minutes before they started making baskets and making plays. The lead changed 15 times—six of them in the last six minutes, before Pittsburgh's LeVance Fields hit a pair of free throws with 5.5 seconds left to make it 76-all.

Reggie Redding, who threw the ball away trying a full-court pass on the previous inbounds play, got it to Dante Cunningham this time, and he dished it to Reynolds. The Villanova guard weaved his way into the lane for a falling-down floater in traffic.

The clock expired, and the Wildcats celebrated. But the officials immediately moved to put a half-second back on the clock.

Fields took the inbounds pass and launched a 65-footer that hit the backboard but then bounced harmlessly to the floor.

Villanova coach Jay Wright went first to hug his wife and kids, then made his way to Rollie Massimino to share the moment with the last Wildcats mentor to reach the Final Four. That team beat Georgetown in an affair that was dominated by the Big East—St. John's also made it—just like this year's weekend in Detroit promises to be.

Connecticut advanced to the national semifinals earlier Saturday, so it was already certain that at least half of the Final Four would come from the Big East.

Reynolds was picked the most outstanding player of the regional.

Villanova, which beat Pitt back in Janu-

ary, got there in a way that would make the big, bruising Big East proud.

Pittsburgh guard Jermaine Dixon left for most of the second half after landing awkwardly—in the splits—before Villanova's Shane Clark landed on his left leg.

Blair played the second half blood stains from an unknown victim streaking his shorts. Two Pitt players came over the first-row press table during the game, sending monitors and telephones and a pair of New York sports writers a-skitter.

The Panthers played Steelers-style basketball, but every time they sent Villanova to the line the Wildcats calmly sank them—until Redding missed with a chance to make it a five-point game with 20 seconds left. Blair scored on a layup with 13 seconds to go, and then Redding tried a full-court inbounds pass that Dixon gathered in.

Fields sank two free throws to tie it—the 10th tie of the game.

Villanova held Pitt to one basket in the first 4:59 and opened a 10-3 lead, making it

for-10 from the line in the final 1:02. The Huskies are still in the hunt for their third national title—the first two went through regionals in Phoenix in 1999 and 2004.

When it ended, UConn coach Jim Calhoun made an exaggerated fist pump and the Huskies mobbed each other at center court.

"It's an amazing feeling," said A.J. Price, who added 18 points for the Huskies (31-4). "It was a total team effort."

Leo Lyons and Matt Lawrence each had 13 points for Missouri (31-7), which overcame an early 13-2 deficit but couldn't match the muscular Huskies on the boards. UConn outrebounded Mizzou 47-32.

Down 67-59 with 4:15 to play, the Tigers edged within 68-65 on Justin Stafford's tip-in with 2:42 to go.

Walker answered with an off-balance bank shot, and then Price hit a jumper from the lane to push the Huskies' lead to 72-67. The Tigers never recovered.

Dogged by reports alleging that they vio-

lently run.

Sensing the upset, the University of Phoenix Stadium crowd of 18,886 began to roar.

But the Huskies, toughened by a winter in the rugged Big East, began to reassert themselves inside. They went on a 6-0 run to take a 67-59 lead with 4:15 to play and never trailed again.

Billy Gillispie regrets not winning more at Kentucky

LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP)—Billy Gillispie doesn't know about chemistry problems or whether he was the right fit at Kentucky. What he does know is that he simply didn't win enough games.

"I wish we would have won more," Gillispie said Saturday, less than 24 hours after the university fired him following two turbulent seasons.

During an amiable 30-minute meeting with reporters, Gillispie hardly sounded like the coach whose prickly act had quickly worn thin during his brief time at the home of college basketball's winningest program.

He cracked jokes, asking if someone wanted to buy his mansion. He smiled, a rarity during his final days with the program. And he said he had no ill feelings toward athletic director Mitch Barnhart, who cited philosophical differences as the reason Gillispie was let go.

"I'm not a woe-is-me kind of person," Gillispie said. "I've always said this, show up every day, try to work hard, try to do your best with the right attitude and everything works out right. I've had a great time here at Kentucky."

One that was cut short after Gillispie went just 40-27 in two seasons. Kentucky stumbled down the stretch this year to miss the NCAA tournament for the first time since 1991. Not exactly the make-over the program anticipated when he was hired to replace Tubby Smith in April 2007.

While Barnhart said the decision was about more than wins or losses, Gillispie argued he never shied away from the public responsibilities that come with being the state's highest-paid and most visible employee.

Ultimately, however, he knew his main job was to restore some of the luster at a school that hasn't been to a Final Four in more than a decade. On that front, he knows he didn't live up to the expectations he embraced during the rowdy pep rally that greeted him two years ago.

"We didn't win the right kind of games," he said. "We just had a couple of bad stretches and an inexperienced team did that. But they kept getting better,

they kept on fighting and they finished up really strong and I think it's going to really help them in the future."

A future that will go on without him. He refused to feel sorry for himself and doesn't believe he was forced out by an impatient fan base.

"Tough times don't last but they say tough people do, and I'm pretty tough," he said. "I'm looking forward to moving on."

So are the Wildcats, who are looking for a coach for the second time in three years.

Michigan State coach Tom Izzo and Memphis coach John Calipari are among Kentucky's top targets, though the divorce from Gillispie could get messy.

Barnhart said Friday he doesn't expect to pay Gillispie a \$6 million buyout for dismissing him after two seasons, citing Gillispie's refusal to agree to a formal contract.

The coach worked under a memorandum of understanding signed following his whirlwind courtship by the school. Barnhart said the university would try to negotiate a fair separation agreement but believes it will be well below \$6 million.

Gillispie believes he's due the full amount.

"That's what it says in the contract, that's what it looks like to me," he said. "I don't know all the details and all those kind of things. I just know we signed a contract. It was a shorter version than maybe some."

After taking a one-day "vacation," Gillispie said he expects to get back into coaching as soon as possible and doesn't believe his reputation has been damaged by his sudden fall from grace.

"I think my track record proves that we can recruit, we can really coach," he said. "We won't let this bother us. It's a bump in the road. It's not an ending in the road and we'll bounce back very quickly."

Just not at Kentucky, a school Gillispie expects to be back at the top of the Southeastern Conference no matter who takes his place. He has simply one request from the 24,000 fans who pack Rupp Arena every winter if the road back to prominence takes longer than expected.

"If they don't win every game, I think they ought to be on the coach all the time," he said with a laugh. "I think they need to turn the heat up on that a little bit any time they lose a game and they may not lose one."



Villanova guard Scottie Reynolds (1) goes up for the winning basket against Pittsburgh's Gilbert Brown in the second half during a men's NCAA tournament regional championship college basketball game in Boston, Saturday, March 28, 2009.

22-12 midway through the first half before the Panthers scored eight straight. Fields got it started with a 3-pointer, and Blair cut it to two points on a three-point play with just under eight minutes remaining.

Pitt trailed by three with several chances to tie it before Fields stepped back and hit a 3-pointer—the mirror-image of his game-winning shot from the regional semifinal over Xavier—to make it 30-all with 1:50 left in the half. After trading free throws, Young hit a pair with 4 seconds left to give Pittsburgh a 34-32 halftime lead.

UConn 82, Missouri 75

At Glendale, Ariz., Connecticut is making another trip from the desert to the Final Four. The wait goes on for Missouri. Freshman Kemba Walker scored 23 points as the top-seeded Huskies held off Missouri 82-75 on Saturday to earn a trip to Detroit and extend the Big East's dominance of the NCAA tournament.

The Huskies blew an early 11-point lead but survived against the frenetic third-seeded Tigers, who were denied their first Final Four berth.

UConn clinched the victory by going 10-

lated NCAA recruiting rules, the Huskies had vowed to keep their focus on the task of earning a trip to Detroit.

The first meeting between the schools featured a clash of styles. The Tigers, who had scored 102 points on Memphis on Thursday night, wanted to run. The Huskies tried to force a halfcourt game and take advantage of their superior size and strength.

Early on, it was all UConn. The Huskies easily broke Missouri's pressure defense and built a 13-2 lead before Mizzou coach Mike Anderson called timeout three minutes into the game.

The Tigers regrouped, and on the next possession they drew the first foul on 7-foot-3 center Hasheem Thabeet, who went to the bench. Thabeet returned six minutes later but soon returned to the bench with his second foul.

It was clear the Tigers weren't going to go away.

A bucket off a nifty spin move by Price at the buzzer gave UConn a 44-38 halftime lead.

But Missouri kept coming. Keith Ramsey's layup off a dish from J.T. Tiller gave Missouri its first lead, 50-49, with 13:30 to play. That capped a 9-0

O'Hair survives tough day to keep lead at Bay Hill



ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Sean O'Hair survived a windy, rugged test Saturday at Bay Hill and wound up in the final group with Tiger Woods for the second straight year - with one big difference.

This time, the tournament is in his hands.

Despite three bogeys in the last four holes, O'Hair had a 1-over 71 and a five-shot lead over Woods going into the final round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

"Sometimes, you have to hang on for dear life," O'Hair said. "Those three bogeys didn't reflect how I played."

Woods, the defending champion and a five-time winner at Bay Hill, was fortunate to be only five behind. He made bogey putts of 10 feet and 25 feet on the last three holes, the last one on No. 18 after Woods never found a shot that plugged into the bank of the lake.

O'Hair and Woods were part of a five-way tie after 54 holes last year, and Woods won with a 25-foot birdie on the last hole.

Woods, who had a 71, has never won at Bay Hill when trailing going into the last round. His largest comeback on the PGA Tour was five shots at the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am in 2000.

It was a wild finish that matched the day at Bay Hill.

O'Hair had a six-shot lead with four holes to play when just like everyone else, he had to hang on for dear life. But at least he wound up in the best spot, at 7-under 203 and the largest 54-hole lead at Bay Hill since Woods led by five in 2003.

Woods had a flyer from the rough on the 16th hole that hit a cart path and went 50 yards right of the 16th green. His chip went over the green and nearly into the water, and he knocked in a 10-footer to escape with bogey.

From deep rough on the 18th, he again went at the green, and the ball disappeared into the shaggy bank framing the lake. After a search lasting five minutes, Woods returned to the fairway, then made his longest putt of the week to at least secure a spot in the final group.

That was the least of his worries.

"To be honest, I didn't want to end up with a double bogey," he said. "I finished over par, but I thought I played better than that."

Jason Gore, who received a sponsor's exemption from the tournament host, was poised to join Woods and O'Hair until a three-putt from 5 feet on the final hole for a double bogey, giving him a 74.

A prime example of the tough scoring conditions was former Masters champion Zach Johnson. He started the third round nine shots out of the lead, shot a 68 and will play in the final group with O'Hair and Woods.

Because of rain in the forecast, the starting times Sunday will be threesomes in the middle of the day. If the forecast for heavy overnight rain holds true, it could drastically change a Bay Hill course that has been firm, fast and tough all week.

The third round was the toughest yet, with the average score nearly 3 1/2 shots over par.

"You're just plotting your way around—fairway, green, then trying to two-putt most of the time," Johnson said. "It's difficult. Par is a great number today."

Pistons beat Wizards in Arenas' return to lineup



WASHINGTON (AP)—Gilbert Arenas nearly had a heroic finish to his first game in almost a year. Instead, it was Kwame Brown—of all people—who blocked Agent Zero's shot in the final seconds to help preserve the Detroit Pistons' 98-96 victory over the Washington Wizards.

With 4.5 seconds remaining Saturday and the Wizards trailing by two, Arenas chased down the rebound of his missed own free throw. He whirled to put up a potential game-winning 3-pointer, but former Wizards flop Brown got a hand on the shot. Caron Butler then grabbed the ball and missed a baseline jumper at the buzzer, and the Pistons escaped with a victory that sent their tenuous playoff hopes—at least temporarily—headed back in the right direction.

Arenas finished with 15 points and 10 assists in 30 minutes in his first game since April 27, 2008. The three-time All-Star had missed 156 of his team's previous 173 games, including playoffs, thanks to a knee injury that spawned two overeager comeback attempts and three surgeries over an 18-month span.

Richard Hamilton, back after missing six games with a left groin injury, scored 16 of his 31 points in the third quarter as the Pistons broke a three-game losing streak. Detroit had lost six of its previous seven, including five of six without Hamilton, and is teetering precariously in eighth place in the Eastern Conference. The win moved the Pistons within percentage points of Chicago for seventh place.

Hamilton made 11 of his season-high 29 attempts and seemed to put the game comfortably in Detroit's favor by camping out along the baseline for wide open 3-pointers in the third period. The Pistons led by as many as 15 in the third before the Wizards rallied, feeding off the energy of younger players such as Javaris Crittenton, Nick Young, Dominic McGuire and JaVale McGee and the presence of Arenas.

Arenas was determined to make sure he was completely healthy before attempting another comeback, especially with Washington mired in last place in the East. His knee seemed to pose him no problem. He hit the floor several times and was never slow getting up, even when he was tripped by Rodney Stuckey during a drive to the basket in the fourth quarter.

Arenas started the game strong, with an assist to Andray Blatche for the Wizards' first bucket, a lob to Dominic McGuire for a dunk for the next score, another dish to Blatche

on the next trip down and a feed to Butler on basket No. 4. Arenas then hit an open 3-pointer to complete his team's 11-2 start.

But Arenas didn't have a hand in another basket for the rest of the half. He sat down after 10 minutes and didn't return until the second of the second half. He played the entire third quarter, shooting 2-of-6 with three assists.

When he returned in the fourth, Arenas made a behind-the-back pass

Williams also had 13 assists and scored Utah's last four points during a 9-2 run to close the fourth quarter and force overtime with the game tied at 90. Williams only had one field goal in OT, but was 5-for-5 from the foul line and made all nine of his free throws for the night.

Mehmet Okur finished with 26 points and 11 rebounds for the Jazz, who won their 14th straight at home.

Steve Nash scored 20 points and Grant Hill added 19 points for the Suns.

Nuggets 129, Warriors 116

At Denver, Carmelo Anthony scored 31 points, Linas Kleiza had 22 and Denver won its third straight by beating banged-up Golden State.

Chauncey Billups had 14 and Chris Andersen added 10 points and 11 rebounds for the Nuggets, who entered playing leading Portland by 1 1/2 games in the Northwest Division and have won eight of their last games.

Jamal Crawford had 30 points and Kelenna Azubuike scored 21 for the Warriors, who have lost four straight and five of their last six.

Rockets 110, Clippers 93

At Houston, Yao Ming had 21 points and 15 rebounds, and Houston led from start to finish in an easy victory over Los Angeles.

Aaron Brooks added 21 points, Shane Battier scored 15 and the Rockets stayed in third place in the Western Conference by beating the Clippers for the 20th time in the last 24 meetings.

Eric Gordon scored 17 and Chris Kaman had 16 points for the Clippers, who played without Baron Davis (calf strain/ulcers) and leading rebounder Marcus Camby (sprained left ankle). Los Angeles has lost 11 of its last 12 road games.

Bobcats 96, Knicks 85

At Charlotte, N.C., Gerald Wallace had 23 points, nine rebounds and eight assists, and Charlotte matched a modest franchise record for victories by

beating New York.

Larry Brown earned a split in the season series with his former team, coaching the fifth-year Bobcats to their 33rd win in his first season to stay in the hunt for their first playoff berth.

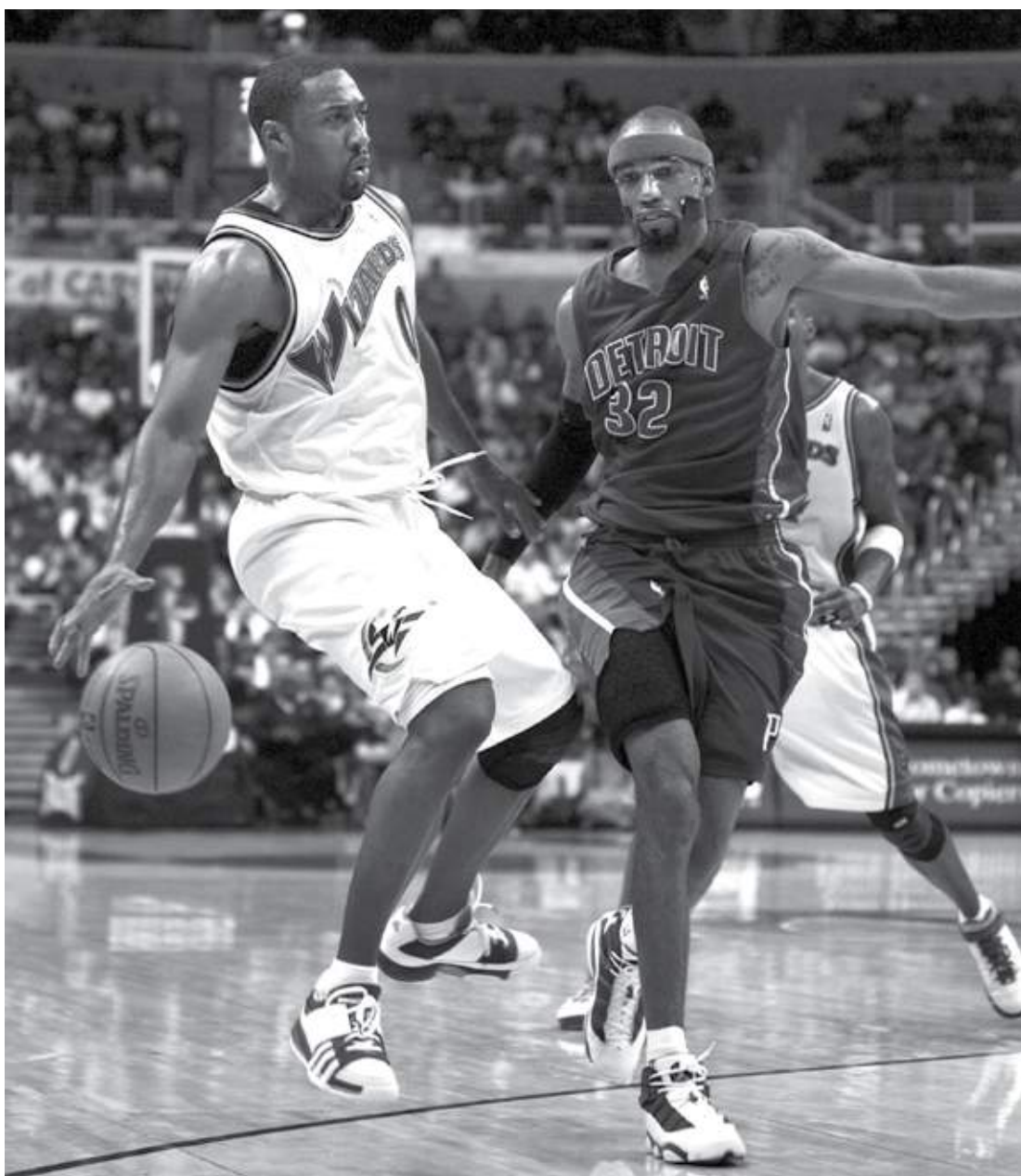
D.J. Augustin added 19 points and Emeka Okafor had 13 points and 14 rebounds for the Bobcats, who won their second straight game after an ugly loss to Washington.

Wilson Chandler and Al Harrington scored 18 points apiece for the Knicks, who struggled defensively and lost for the seventh time in eight games.

Trail Blazers 86, Grizzlies 66

At Portland, Ore., Brandon Roy had 21 points and eight rebounds to lead Portland to its sixth straight victory over Memphis. LaMarcus Aldridge added 18 points for the Blazers.

O.J. Mayo had 12 points while Rudy Gay and Marc Gasol each added 10 for the Grizzlies, who have lost 10 of their last 12 games. They were held to their lowest scoring output this season.



Washington Wizards' Gilbert Arenas, left, is guarded by Detroit Pistons' Richard Hamilton (32) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, March 28, 2009, in Washington.

Bulls 112, Pacers 106

At Chicago, John Salmons scored 22 points and hit two late 3-pointers, and Chicago pulled out a wild victory over Indiana for its fourth straight win.

Ben Gordon added 25 points as the Bulls matched their longest win streak in two years.

Danny Granger scored 32 and Brandon Rush added a career-high 29, but the Pacers lost for the sixth time in eight games.

Heat 102, Bucks 85

At Miami, Dwyane Wade scored 27 points, Udonis Haslem had 16 points and 12 rebounds for his 100th career double-double, and Miami improved its stance in the Eastern Conference playoff chase by beating reeling Milwaukee.

James Jones and Michael Beasley each scored 11 and Jermaine O'Neal added 10 for the Heat, who snapped a two-game losing streak.

Richard Jefferson scored 32 and Dan Gadzuric had 18 points and 12 rebounds for Milwaukee, which lost its fifth straight.

to McGuire in transition set up a dunk that gave the Wizards an 87-86 lead and brought the fans to their feet.

Hamilton's 3-pointer gave the Pistons a 94-89 lead with 2:10 to play, but the Wizards were back within one after Arenas' nice bounce pass set up Blatche's dunk with 26 seconds left. Hamilton made both free throws with 5 seconds left to make the score 98-95.

Hamilton then fouled Arenas immediately after Washington inbounded the ball. Arenas made the first and missed the second, setting up the frantic finish and the block by Brown, the former No. 1 overall Wizards draft pick who was one of the biggest disappointments in franchise history.

Jamison scored 21 points to lead the Wizards. Blatche had 15.

Jazz 104, Suns 99, OT

At Salt Lake City, Deron Williams scored seven of his 21 points in overtime, and Utah rallied to beat Phoenix, blowing a 21-point, third-quarter lead before tying it with a frenzied comeback at the end of regulation.

Budweiser caging playoffs at Garapan court

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Four games in the playoff round in the 2008-2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League will be played at the Garapan Basketball Court.

League commissioner Gabriel White said some playoff games are moved from the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium to the Garapan court at the request of event sponsor Budweiser, which will be holding fun activities for fans in three playoff dates.

Playoffs will begin tonight with two games to be played at the Ada gym. The next two games will still be played at the Susupe facility before players go to the Garapan

court for two matches on April 3. The next game in Garapan is set for April 10, which will be the playoff match for the last finals ticket. Game 1 of the championship match on April 13 is also scheduled at the Garapan court. Game 2, if necessary, will go back to the Ada gym and will be played on April 15.

All seven teams advanced to the double-elimination playoffs with pennant champion CNMI Nationals getting a bye in the first round.

The Nationals finished the double round-robin regular season with a 9-3 slate.

Diamond Auto Shop, which

started its campaign in the annual caging with a 0-3 mark, had a 7-5 record, making an uphill climb for second place.

Ol'Aces and IT&E also finished with 7-5 slates, but lost to the Auto Fixers in the tiebreak.

Ol'Aces dropped to third, while IT&E slipped to fourth place.

Quichocho Law Office and Docomo were also tied with identical 5-7 records, but the former prevailed in the tiebreak and occupied the No. 5 spot. In seventh place were the Runnin' Rebels.

Tonight's game will have the No. 4 seed IT&E colliding with Quichocho Office in Game 1 at

6:30pm. In Game 2 at 8pm, Diamond Auto Care will battle the Runnin' Rebels.

On Wednesday, Game 3 will have Ol'Aces squaring off with Docomo at 6:30pm. The CNMI Nationals will play in their first playoff game against the winner of Game 1 at 8pm.

The remaining schedule will depend on the results of the first four playoff matches.

The Runnin' Rebels' Jerome Norita, right, pulls up for a fade-away jumper against Diamond Auto Care's Bruce Berline during their game in the regular season of the Budweiser caging at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



AIKEN

From Page 28

more powerful and connected more punches that hit the former's body and forehead so hard.

"I almost quit but then a fight is a fight. I just wanted to give all of what I have when I have a big chance to do it," Aiken said.

In the non-title welterweight semi main event, Eduard "The Landslide" Folleyang of the Philippines won against Saipan's Jerome Norita of Marianas Elite.

Folleyang is now 4-0, as the reigning URCC champion from Northern Luzon won via technical knockout in 52 seconds of the first round.

One of the undercard fights was cancelled to the frustration of Jay "Furbs" Santos, whose opponent, Joel "Mushu" Pangelinan, did not show up, citing injury.

The lone women fight ended in the quickest win of the night with Tara "The Tarantula" Namaleg winning over Kristy "The Tasty" Halstead via verbal tapout in 23 seconds in the first round of

their flyweight showdown.

Namaleg is now 2-0, while Halstead lost her debut.

In the middleweight division, Shane "N Sane" Camacho of Team Zogai won via TKO over Lionel "Da Hellion" Borja of Marianas Elite in 53 seconds in the first round.

Swain "The Pain" Cangco of Predator Combat Team beat Victorino "The Hitman" Igitol by unanimous decision in their light heavyweight encounter.

In another light heavyweight fight, John "The Jackhammer" Borja of Predator Combat Team

won in 3:11 of the first round on a tapout against Noel "The Lion Heart" Taisacan.

In the open weight class, Robert "Pitbull" Palacios finally scored his first win after four fights against Rick "2 Slick" San Nicolas, who dropped to a 0-10 slate.

In the bantamweight bout, Martin Ayuyu of Marianas Elite kept his perfect fight record of 3-0 by defeating Jay "Tabi" Muna.

Leroy Sablan improved his record to 4-2 after beating J.J. "The Mauler" Mality (1-5) in the featherweight division.

ing Center.

It was the first fight outside of the U.S. mainland for the 6'3", 246-lb. behemoth.

Fitial, meanwhile, improved his record to 18-7-1 win-loss-draw.

"I didn't expect this to happen, but I just did my best in the fight," said the 244-lb, 25-year-old Fitial.

In the other game, CHC won via forfeit against a no-show Pacific Islands Club. Both teams are now out of playoff contention with 7-11 and 5-13 records, respectively.

Six other teams were eliminated early, including PSS (6-11), DLNR (6-12), Customs (4-14), Mayor's (4-14), Law & Order (3-15), and Hopwood (0-17).

Wednesday's Game

China Town 89 – Casabuena 30, Fernandez 24, Garcia 11, Laquian 10, Alcantara 8, Pacheco 6, Morales 2.

Wild Boys 62 – Abedes 14, Tengco 14, Bautista 9, Banaag 8, Dizon 6, Lagmay 4, Razon 4, Cabading 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-25, 44-34, 65-48, 89-62.

Saturday's Game

Shirley's 106 – Montano 29, Malasarte 18, Samson 17, Sublemente 10, Galulu 7, Canedo 6, Besmonte 4, Diyco 3.

Gualo Rai 89 – Ebuen 30, Lansang 24, Cisno 10, Dizon 8, Razon 4, Echavez 2, Bicara 2.

Scoring by quarters: 30-12, 46-48, 64-63, 106-89.

FITIAL

From Page 28

inflicting more damage.

Fitial continued his domination of Carpenter in the second round and with a minute and 35 seconds gone, the referee stopped the fight when the former knocked the latter down

with a right hook to the chin.

The referee's decision to halt the match didn't sit well with the crowd, as they pelted the ring with plastic cups full of beer from all directions.

"I don't want to disappoint the people. All I was thinking was to win the fight and keep the pride for the CNMI flag. I had to get out of that," Fitial said.

He did parade the CNMI flag around the ring after the referee declared him the winner.

Carpenter promptly accepted the verdict, but couldn't give any comment after going out of the ring.

It was the first defeat in five fights for the Illinois, Chicago-based Carpenter, a 22-year-old fighter of the Midwest Train-

P&S

From Page 28

25 hits with 21 RBIs, seven doubles, two homeruns, and a triple.

Yamada's third hit of the night was a grand slam in the top of the third inning, sending Domingo Hocog, Ton Aguon, and Cruz home. Lizama and Reno

Celis also reached home later in the inning and Freedom Air was way ahead, 14-1.

Yamada grounded out in his last two tries at bat. He finished the game with six RBIs and three runs.

Cruz went 5-for-5 with five runs, an RBI, and a triple. Roy Celis had three RBIs, two runs, and a single while Lizama added four RBIs and

three runs.

Camacho added four RBIs, three hits, two doubles.

On the mound, Camacho struck out two of the 21 batters he faced, but allowed only seven hits with two runs.

Aguon went 3-for-4 with four runs, a single, and an RBI.

CRM/DEQ is now out of the playoffs with a 7-10 record, good for only 12th place.

CHINA

From Page 28

high-scoring game with the former having more reserves in the payoff canto, outscoring the latter, 42-26. Shirley's was ahead by only a hair at the end of the third period, 64-63, before its guns went to ablaze in the fourth quarter for a 17-point win.

In Wednesday's game, China Town, which bowed to Navy Hill, 93-98, during the opening of the Masters caging, recovered from a slow start to tame the Wild Boys.

In its second game, China Town was still groping for form in the first quarter and fell behind by four, 21-25. With only seven players reporting for the

game, China Town had difficulty keeping pace with Wild Boys in the first 10 minutes of the game.

But China Town's fortunes changed in the second quarter, as Bert Laquian, Amor Casabuena, and Sam Fernandez got their games going. The trio combined for 19 of China Town's 25 points in the second canto, putting the team in the driver's seat at halftime, 44-34.

Wild Boys went cold in the second period, scoring only nine points, and they never regained form in the last 20 minutes of the match, which was halted twice due to rain.

China Town was pulling away midway in the third quarter when referees stopped the game, as it started to rain. But

in less than 10 minutes, the match resumed. Going into the last minute of the third canto, it rained again, but players continued to play, and Boy Garcia canned a buzzer-beating triple to increase China Town's lead to 17, 65-48.

Casabuena led China Town's breakaway in the third, making 10 points in that period, only four points less of Wild Boys' total output

Organizers waited for the rain to stop before resuming the game in the fourth quarter. When both teams returned to the court, it was Fernandez's turn to run the show, hitting 12 markers in the fourth period and almost outscoring the entire Wild Boys crew, who had only 13 points in that canto.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS									
EASTERN CONFERENCE									
Atlantic Division									
	W	L	Pct	GB					
y-Boston	55	19	.743	—					
Philadelphia	37	34	.521	16 1/2					
New Jersey	30	42	.417	24					
New York	29	44	.397	25 1/2					
Toronto	27	45	.375	27					
Central Division									
y-Cleveland	59	13	.819	—					
Chicago	36	38	.486	24					
Detroit	35	37	.486	24					
Milwaukee	31	43	.419	29					
Indiana	30	43	.411	29 1/2					
Southeast Division									
y-Orlando	54	18	.750	—					
x-Atlanta	42	31	.575	12 1/2					
Miami	39	34	.534	15 1/2					
Charlotte	33	40	.452	21 1/2					
Washington	17	57	.230	38					
Western Conference									
Southwest Division									
San Antonio	48	24	.667	—					
Houston	48	26	.649	1					
New Orleans	44	27	.620	3 1/2					
Dallas	43	29	.597	5					
Memphis	18	53	.254	29 1/2					
Northwest Division									
Denver	47	26	.644	—					
Portland	45	27	.625	1 1/2					
Utah	44	27	.620	2					
Oklahoma City	20	52	.278	26 1/2					
Minnesota	20	53	.274	27					
Pacific Division									
y-LA Lakers	58	14	.806	—					
Phoenix	40	32	.556	18					
Golden State	25	47	.347	33					
LA Clippers	18	56	.243	41					
Sacramento	15	56	.211	42 1/2					
Yesterday's Games									
Detroit 98, Washington 96									
Utah 104, Phoenix 99									
Chicago 112, Indiana 106									
Miami 102, Milwaukee 85									
Denver 129, Golden State 116									
Houston 110, LA Clippers 93									
Charlotte 96, New York 85									
Portland 86, Memphis 66									
Cliff Kresge 74 68 71 213									
Stewart Cink 70 71 72 213									
Kenny Perry 70 71 72 213									
Graeme McDowell 71 69 73 213									
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The Week in Sports

Japanese cage team, MMA fighters in spotlight

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

Visiting athletes were in focus in last week's events that kept members of the sports community busy, as usual.

First to arrive on Saipan was Eduard "Landslide" Folyang, a Universal Reality Combat Championship champion from the Philippines.

Folyang, who arrived here early Monday morning (March 23), was set to duel local pride Jerome Denard Norita in the semi main event of Gorilla Warfare MMA's Battle Ready Saturday (March 28) at the Royal Taga Hall of Saipan World Resort.

Two more off-island MMA fighters—Ed Carpenter of Chicago and Guam's Mike Davis—came in later in the week.

Joining the three visitors were 19

other local/Saipan-based fighters.

Over at the Marianas High School Gymnasium, 20 Japanese youth basketball players challenged Saipan's bets.

The Settsu Red Impulse Basketball Club brought its boys' 16-and-under team and girls' 14-and-under squad here to compete in the Inaugural Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament.

The visitors played on Thursday and Friday and returned to Osaka, Japan with the perpetual trophy in the girls' 14-and-under division.

Settsu's cagebells won the title after beating the MISO Junior Varsity All-Stars, 61-44. Settsu also prevailed over Hopwood, 93-42.

The visitors' boys team lost to the MHS Dolphins by a hair, 74-75, but still showed an impressive game, especially in the first half. Southern's Manta Rays ruled the boys' 16-and-under di-

vision after whipping the Dolphins in the finals, 106-72.

Other teams that joined the tournament were Chacha Oceanview Junior High's Lady Lancheros and Kagman High School's Ayuyus.

Another inaugural event unfolded last week with Pacific Islands Club hosting the PIC Bike for Life. The race, which aimed to raise funds for the March Against Cancer Coalition, drew 31 participants.

The trio of James Abuy, Ben Dela Cruz, and Ely Dolore won the 20-kilometer race from Paupau Beach via Bird Island Park to Banzai Cliff.

The northern portion of the island was also the venue for the unique Leapfrog race that drew more than 20 participants.

The race involved a two-person team using one bicycle, each alternating the bike and run leg portion of the race. Everyone starts the race at the same time.

Middle distance runner Champ Untalan and Tom Linden won the event, which covered a distance of 8.5 miles from Paupau Beach via the Kalabera Road-Pale Arnold Road junction and Banzai Cliff and back.

In bowling, youth kegler Raphael Zapanta was alone at the top of the Fiji Water Prince/Princess of the Lanes tournament. He won his third monthly title after tallying 776 pinfalls and beating six other youth bowlers in the March roll-off.

Raphael's older brother, Raymond, and Ron Cal claimed their first monthly plum after prevailing in the Budweiser March King and Queen of the Lanes tournament at the Saipan Bowling Center.

In Saipan Little League Baseball, Ol'Aces cruised to their sixth win in a row in the Majors Division after taming the Little Lions, 17-1, at the Miguel

"Tan Ge" Pangelinan Ballfield.

In the Seniors Division, the Jets were also on a roll, zooming past the Kagman Lion Kings, 13-1, for their third straight victory.

Still in baseball, the Ford Rangers seized the solo lead in the 2009 Budweiser Saipan Major League after humbling the Tigers, 25-11. The Rangers now hold a 4-1 record, a win ahead of defending champion Rock Steady and D-9ers.

In basketball, the 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League is down to two teams. Dollar Days and KFC/Taco Bell downed separate foes in the semis to arrange their championship duel in the Navy Hill caging.

KFC/Taco Bell clinched the first finals ticket after slipping past Inchcape, 99-95, Thursday night, while Dollar Days sealed the second finals berth after outlasting Athlete's Foot, 88-77.



Members of Settsu's girls team pose with their championship trophy. Joining them is BANMI president Elias Rangamar.



Settsu's Hitataka Sakaguchi challenges two MHS Dolphins defenders during their game in the Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



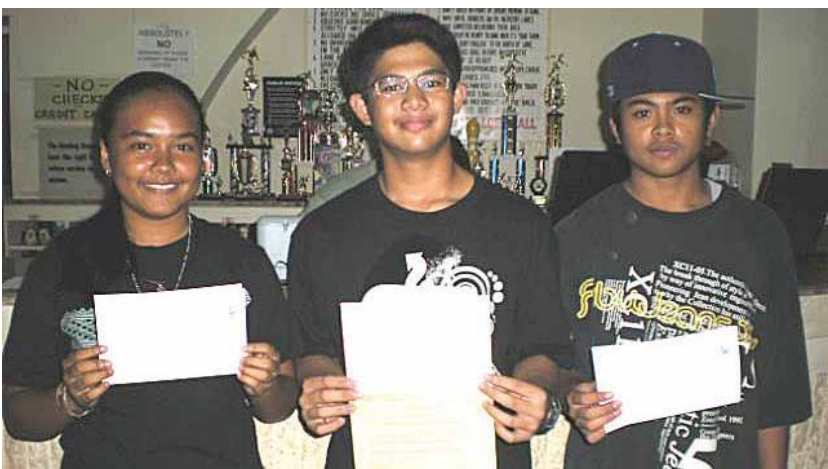
Eduard "Landslide" Folyang, center, of the Philippines was on Saipan for the Gorilla Warfare MMA's "Battle Ready" held Saturday at the Saipan World Resort. Joining him in this photo are Gorilla Warfare MMA's Mark Sablan, left, and Folyang's coach, Mark Sangiao.



Jeremy Lizama of Ol'Aces hurls one of their 12 strikeouts against the Little Lions in the Major division of the 2009 Saipan Little League last week at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Ballfield.



KFC/Taco Bell's Maverick Itibus, left, and Inchcape's Tim Wesley battle for the ball during their semis game in the Navy Hill caging last week at the Garapan Basketball Court.



Fiji Water March Prince of the Lanes winner Raphael Zapanta is flanked by third place Lianne Yarobwemal, left, and Marion McKenzie during the awards ceremony at the Saipan Bowling Center Sunday.



Participants in Leapfrog 2 wait for the start of the race at Paupau Beach.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.



Reynolds, 'Nova nick Pitt in East Region

Scottie Reynolds made a half-court dash for the game-winning shot with 0.5 seconds left, leading Villanova over Pittsburgh 78-76 Saturday night and back to the Final Four for the first time since its shocking run to the 1985 championship.

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Japanese cage team, MMA fighters in spotlight

Visiting athletes were in focus in last week's events that kept members of the sports community busy, as usual.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Aiken scores TKO win over Davis

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Charlz "The Predator" Aiken triumphed over Mike "The Ogre" Davis with a technical knockout win in the first round of their heavyweight undercard clash Saturday in the Gorilla Warfare MMA "Battle Ready," stunning spectators at the full-packed Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.



After Davis knocked him down early in the match, Aiken rose from brink of collapse with the full might of a bull and delivered the killer blows against his much heavier and taller opponent from Guam. Aiken is 6'0" and weighs 236 lbs., while Davis is taller and heavier at 6'3" and 319 lbs. They are both 27 years old.

"My knees almost gave up. I was just waiting for him to come close to me," Aiken said.

Once he had the opportunity midway in the first round, Aiken held David on the waist and hip and put him down onto the ground with the former's body hitting the ropes and his head facing down and laying at the technical officials' table.

Davis lied down for several minutes there, while medics helped him regain consciousness. He refused to be carried on a stretcher, but could not continue the fight, as his body was still aching from that fateful fall. Davis later walked out of the ring on his own.

With the win, Aiken, who is fighting for the Predator Combat Team, improved his record to 8-2, while Davis of The Crew 671 suffered his fourth loss in eight fights.

Aiken recalled how he thought of giving up early in the first round.

"In every punch I got from him, I thought I was going to drop," Aiken said.

Aiken added he tried to trade punches with Davis, but the latter appeared

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NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Charlz "The Predator" Aiken scored a technical knockout win in the first round against Mike "The Ogre" Davis in Gorilla Warfare MMA "Battle Ready" at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort last Saturday.

P&S upsets CPA to boost playoff bid

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

P&S is showing toughness in make-up games and scored a big upset over Commonwealth Ports Authority, 12-9, Thursday night in the 2009 Budweiser Inter-Government/Business Slow-pitch Softball League at the Capital Hill Ballpark.

The win boosted P&S' playoff hopes with the number of teams vying for the last two slots now reduced to three.

After Thursday's results, P&S (9-8), POI Aviation (9-8), and Commonwealth Utilities Corp. (8-10) remain in contention, while nine teams in the lower half of the field were already eliminated.



P&S hit 20-for-40 at bat with 12 RBIs against CPA pitchers Ed Mendiola and Donald Pangelinan. Its 12 runs were aided heavily by seven base on balls.

Pitcher Jack Reyes walked to first base three times and finished with two runs.

John Tomokane went 4-for-4 with two RBIs and a run, while Manases Iguel and Joe Quitagua also had two RBIs each to help P&S with the win, as the team raced to

a 10-3 lead in the top of the fourth inning and controlled the game the rest of the way.

Rains forced cancellation of several games this week with 21 more left before the playoffs start.

DCCA had already won the pennant with an immaculate 18-0 record.

Seven other teams also advanced outright to the playoff round. They are, in order of rankings, Beach Boys (15-3), Docomo (15-4), Freedom Air (14-3), Joeten Motors Jets (13-5), No Zone (13-5), CPA (12-5), and Legislature (11-7).

Freedom Air 22, CRM/DEQ 2

Also on Thursday, Freedom Air ousted CRM/DEQ from the next round in a 22-2 10-run mercy rule.

Centerfielder Shane Yamada, extra hitter Dennis Cruz, right fielder Joe Lizama, and pitcher Roque Camacho led in offense as Freedom Air made

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Fitial hammers Carpenter

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Kelvin "The Hitman" Fitial connected a powerful right hook to the chin of Ed Carpenter early in the second round to win via referee stoppage in the main event of last Saturday's Gorilla Warfare MMA "Battle Ready" at the Royal Taga Hall of Saipan World Resort.

Fitial actually was in the brink of defeat in the early goings of the fight, as Carpenter punished him with a barrage of punches in the first round.

Contradicting his promise to use his fists in scoring a first round knockout,

Carpenter went immediately to the ground as he rushed Fitial right from the opening bell and the two fought on the mat for over two minutes.

Right then and there, Carpenter let go off over 50 powerful punches to the face and body, while sitting on top of Fitial's belly.

Fitial struggled for two minutes to get up and as the two fighters suddenly changed position, the Marianas Elite fighter retaliated with strong punches, mostly to Carpenter's head.

Luckily for the mainland fighter, the bell rang preventing Fitial from

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NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Ed Carpenter sits on Kelvin Fitial's belly and lets out a barrage of punches early in the first round of their match in Gorilla Warfare MMA "Battle Ready."

China Town, Shirley's bounce back

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



China Town and Shirley's Coffee Shop recovered from their debut loss in the Masters division of the 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League.

Shirley's, which lost to the CK Legends 95-89, outgunned Gualo Rai, 106-89, Saturday night at the Garapan Basketball Court, while China Town walloped Wild Boys, 89-62, Wednesday night.

Bernard Montano sizzled for 29 points for Shirley's, while three of his teammates also scored in double figures. Bong Malasarte nailed 18 and Nelson Samson and Butch Sublemente chipped in 17 and 10 markers, respectively.

Shirley's and Gualo Rai engaged in a

See CHINA on Page 26

China Town's Sam Fernandez pulls up for a jumper against a Wild Boys defender during their game in the Masters division of the Navy Hill caging Wednesday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

